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ABSTRACT

The curriculum guide reviews the historical background and culture of the peoples of Italy and surveys the Italian community of Connecticut from the time of the earliest immigrants through the present day. The material is ungraded and can be used in elementary and secondary classes. The first part describes a kit, that may be ordered separately, containing artifacts, music, poetry, newspapers, posters, a map, books and booklets on prominent and successful Italians, recipes, and the game "BOCCE". Part two presents a history of the Italians from ancient times through the 20th century, facts about the Italian economy, education, literature, language gestures, music, holidays, festivals, recreational activities, contributions to world science and culture, cuisine, religious beliefs, and family structure. Part three concerns Italian Americans in Connecticut: their demographic origins and present distribution, family mores, employment and occupational practices, religious institutions and festivals, folk beliefs and traditional customs, politics, the media, social organizations throughout the state, art and artists, education, and attitudes toward schooling. Each part incorporates a glossary, learning activities, and references to books and films. (DL)

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THE ITALIANS

– In Their Homeland
– In America
– In Connecticut

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A CURRICULUM GUIDE
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The Peoples of Connecticut
Multicultural Ethnic Heritage Series
Number Two

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Mrs. Dorothy Sterpka, secondary school English teacher, Hartford
Mrs. Jeanne Fulginiti, secondary school teacher, West Hartford

I
INTRODUCTION TO THE TEACHER

This curriculum has been prepared to afford you some concentrated resources which you can use if you would like to study about Italian-Americans in Connecticut.

The purpose of this guide is to introduce you to the contents of the curriculum and offer a few suggestions about learning activities. No unit or lesson plans have been drawn up as the authors consider that these should vary according to each classroom situation. And no objectives, behavioral or otherwise, are elaborated, since we think that aside from the obvious objective of learning about Italo-Americans in Connecticut, teachers are professionals who by definition are people who have internalized their objectives. And as far as students are concerned, each individual will seek to satisfy their own objectives regardless of those we could set. In fact, a very interesting way to begin this study might be to discuss what objectives each person has, keeping in mind that objectives may actually be quite "non-academic".

Contents of the Curriculum

The first item in this curriculum is the informational book which is divided into two major parts: Italy; and the Italian-Americans in Connecticut. The Italian information was gathered together first as it was thought necessary to summarize the socio-cultural background of Italian immigrants. Then the part on Italo-Americans in the state provides as much information as it was possible for us to find or to research in one year. Each part concludes with an extensive list of suggested learning activities and references as well as any films which we reviewed and could recommend.

The second item in the curriculum is a kit (available from Dr. Weibust or Mrs. Gould at the School of Education, University of Connecticut) which contains the following artifacts:

1. Neapolitan playing cards
 - of interest in comparison to American cards
 - may be used to play some Italian card games, as described in part 1 of the informational book under Italian games
 - could stimulate some research projects

(can be obtained at general stores in Italian areas)

2. Music - Caruso record, Johnny Durreli record, San Remo tape, 45 pop record
 - listening activity
 - students may like to learn to sing, play or do research on Italian music
 - could invite a speaker from the Connecticut Opera Association or local opera associations
 - fieldtrip to attend an opera or one of the Italian dances where they have popular Italo-American bands (advertised in Italian papers or radio programs)

(obtainable at Italian or international record stores)

3. Several copies of the two Italo-American newspapers in the state, *La Voce* and the *Connecticut Italian-American Bulletin*, and one copy of the little magazine, *L'Eco d'Italia*, published by the Scalabrini Order at St. Michael's in Wooster Square, New Haven.
 - can be read by students who may like to attend some of the events advertised, or analyse the contents to find out some issues which concern Italo-Americans in the state.

(copies available from publishers or at Italian stores)

6

4. Record containing songs and writings of Italians from several provinces of Italy who emigrated to many countries, other than the U.S. Included with the record is a translation.

- a listening activity for students to hear a number of different Italian dialects, some beautiful music and realize the many countries where Italians have immigrated.

(record available in music store on Franklin Avenue, Hartford)

5. Booklet of poems written by Zia Giuliana an Italian-American lady living in Hartford

- students can read both the original Italian poems and their English translation, noting the use of both Italian and American imagery.

6. Souvenir Program of the Silver Jubilee of Middletown's St. Sebastian Church

- students can read in-depth information about one Italian ethnic church

- may well lead into some study on ethnic churches in general and specific Italian ones in Connecticut which have a long and interesting history

- possibilities here for fieldtrips and historical research

(Program could be obtained from St. Sebastian Church)

7. Booklet on the Life of St. Sebastian, the Martyr

- this is in Italian and if students cannot read it, it still may raise questions for research about Italian saints—there is data about this in part 2 of the informational book

(obtainable from St. Sebastian Church)

8. *il cornu* - the little red hand with two fingers extended is one example of this amulet worn or carried by some southern Italians and Italo-Americans

- this leads well into study of folk beliefs which are covered in both parts of the informational manuscript

(can be bought in Italian general stores and some jewelry shops)

9. Pavane Program, a beautifully published booklet about this Italo-American debutante ball which is held annually in Hartford

- could tie in with research on Italian dances: the *pavane*, the *tarentella* (the national dance) and various folk dances

- students may like to try some of these dances

10. Books

a. *Nino* by Valenti Angelo, a charming story of an Italian family based upon the real-life experiences of the author when his family was in the process of emigrating. (obtainable through book stores or the publisher - there are other excellent books in a series by the same author but they are out of print)

b. *Take a Number* by Armando Perretta, a novel (which is really an autobiography) about life in the Little Italy of Front Street in Hartford. The author, Mr. Perretta, portrays himself as Tony Fazzone, the young hero of this story, who shined shoes, sold newspapers and helped his father with his lottery business. He has created a wonderfully warm, humorous and zesty account which can give us insight into life in this area of Hartford in the early 1900's. (this book is out of print but is obtainable at major book dealers in Hartford)

c. *50 Years In My Adopted Country* by Antonio Gioia, an autobiography of an Italian who immigrated to Torrington in the early 1900's. A very well-written account, this book is full of detail and accurately captures just how hard immigrants had to work to make a life for themselves here. (out of print, found in some libraries)

- these books may inspire students to study the process of immigration to Connecticut which is covered in part 2 of the informational manuscript

- some may like to talk with Italians who immigrated and write up their firsthand story and/or invite someone to talk with the whole class. If this activity is to be done, you should take special care to prepare students so that they do not "bother" people who do not wish to be interviewed; do not infer that all Italians have had the same experiences; and allow "informants" to talk freely without being restricted by specific questions.

11. Posters and map

- can illustrate scenes from Italy and be helpful in the study of geography and the location of provinces

(posters sent free from Alitalia Airlines, map can be bought from National Geographic Magazine)

12. Little Sicilian cart

- illustrates the unique way carts are decorated in Sicily
- may tie into study of provincial differences

(can be bought in Italian stores)

13. Books on Wooster Square, New Haven

- can lead into study of "Little Italies" in Connecticut which is discussed in part 2 of the informational manuscript

(can be purchased from the New Haven Colony, an historical association)

14. Pottery

- illustrative of industry in a certain area of Italy
- ties into further study of the Italian economy

(available in some Italian and department stores)

15. *Italian Regional Cooking*, a beautifully illustrated book describing delicious foods from the various provinces of Italy

- activities might include preparing and eating some of the foods
- could study about differences between Italian foods in the various provinces
- might study about differences between Italian foods and Italo-American foods
- possibility of a fieldtrip to a restaurant
- a good opportunity to invite an Italo-American chef to visit with the class

(book can be purchased in major book stores)

16. Program of the First Anniversary Banquet of the Italian-American Historical Society of Greater Hartford, Inc.

- illustrates the activites of one Italo-American society. There are over 250 of them in the state. Part 2 of the informational book has a great deal of data on this subject.
- a very fruitful subject for research, fieldtrips and speakers

17. a. Graduation Program from the Hartford Public Schools' adult evening classes for immigrants in the early 1900's

b. Hartford Public School Calendar in Italian, for 1974-75

- leading into study of Italian involvement with Connecticut schools, part 2 of the informational manuscript has a section on this

18. *Bocce* (sometimes spelled *bocci*, or *boccie)*

- students may want to learn this game, the rules are explained in part 1 of the informational book under Italian games

(can be purchased at large department stores or sports shops)

19. Set of slides and commentary on Italy and Italian-Americans in Connecticut which illustrate many of the topics covered in the informational manuscript.

Neither the informational book nor the items in the kit are intended to be complete on any one subject. They represent only the resources we were able to amass. We hope that working with these items, you will find them useful and suggestive for your own personal development of curriculum. If you discover inaccuracies, we would appreciate hearing about them. And if you find or create materials which could prove helpful to others, we would welcome any additions you would be willing to share.

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II

ITALY AND THE ITALIANS

INTRODUCTION

Little trace is left of the ancient people who occupied Italy before Roman times. The Etruscans of central Italy, whose empire extended from the Po Valley to southern Italy, are believed to have come from Asia Minor around 1000 B.C. Their culture completely disappeared when the Latin people from Rome conquered them.

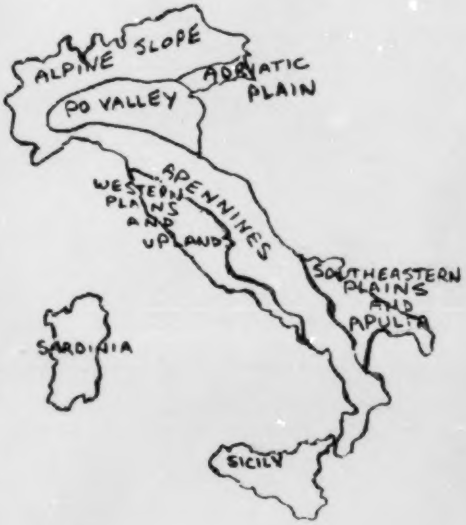
The Greeks colonized Sicily in 700 B.C. and subsequently moved onto the mainland. The Arabs, Berbers and Normans also ruled Sicily at one time. Throughout history Italy has been invaded by foreign conquerors, each one intermarrying with Italians and modifying their ancient languages and socio-cultural system. These changes vary from region to region. The north of Italy has been most affected by invasions from the Alpine and northern regions, therefore many of the northern Italians are light complected with blue eyes. The south of Italy has remained mostly Mediterranean. The Greek and Arab settlements profoundly influenced the history of Sicily and southern Italy, a true melting pot of cultures.

In addition to cultural influences, the physical aspects of the land itself have played a major role in the development of Italian character. North Italy is a wealthy industrial center and the Po Valley is the most fertile agricultural region in Italy. The North Italian has always had more advantages than his southern compatriot. Southern Italy is inherently poor and has throughout history been politically oppressed. The land is mountainous and rugged with little rainfall. The income level of the south is half that of the north. It is from this southern region that most of Italy's emigrants have come.

In order to understand the Italian-Americans, it is first necessary to become familiar with the history and customs of their homeland.

THE LAND

Italy is a small crowded country about the size of Oregon, but with a population numbering approximately fifty million. There are very few natural resources, the rich farmland of the Po Valley being the most important. Although sulphur and mercury are mined in sufficient quantities for some exportation, there are very few other mineral resources. Wheat is the chief crop but by no means is there a sufficient amount to feed all of the population.



The country is divided into eight geographic regions. The northernmost region is the Alps and the lower Alpine Slope, which is heavily forested and used as timberland and pasture. It is also the Alpine region that supplies the hydro-electric power for nothern Italy's industrial cities.

Tuscany and Umbria lie in the northern part of the Western Uplands and Plains region. This is an area of plains and hills that is mostly used for olive groves and livestock as well as some farmland. The coastal plains of the southern part of this region, where Naples and Rome are located, are drier but some farming is also done here.

Apulia, on the Adriatic side of the Apennines, has several fertile plains where vineyards and olive groves are plentiful. The Apulian aqueduct carries water to the major cities of Apulia–Bari, Brindisi and Lecce.

The Po Valley, Italy's most important region economically, lies just below the Alpine Slope. About forty percent of the entire population inhabit this farming area, which includes the industrial cities of Turin and Milan.

East of the Po Valley lies the Adriatic Plain which is used primarily for vineyards and orchards.

Running down the middle of the peninsula from Genoa to Calabria are the Apennine Mountains. The northern and central Apennines provide relatively good grazing areas, but towards the south they become dry and difficult to farm. Many of the Italian immigrants have come from small villages in the southern Apennines.

Sicily, a rugged hilly island which lies off the tip of the boot, has some fertile regions because of the volcanic ash in the soil. Mt. Etna, an active volcano, erupts periodically. Sicilian farmers raise grapes, citrus crops, olives and almonds and the hills are used as grazing land for sheep and goats.

The last region is Sardinia, an island much like Sicily. Nine tenths of the land is mountainous, making farming very difficult. Some crops, similar to those raised in Sicily, are produced and Sardinia leads Italy in cork production. There are also copper and other minerals mined in small quantity.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ITALY

ETRUSCANS

Not too much is actually known of the Etruscan people who inhabited Etruria (Tuscany), but scholars have learned some facts from their frescoes and tombs which have been excavated. The Etruscan culture was the first well-developed culture known in Italy. Their language is related to the Asia Minor languages and for this reason it is believed that they came from Asia Minor and conquered the Po Valley region in circa 1000 B.C.

Etruscan culture spread throughout Latin-speaking areas and reached its height in 400 B.C. Rome became an Etruscan stronghold. In 600 B.C. the Gauls invaded and took over the northern Etruscan holdings and in 510 B.C. the Romans overthrew the Etruscans and established a republic of their own in Rome. With the help of the Greeks, the Romans crushed the Etruscans whose culture gradually disappeared.

GREEKS

In the eighth century B.C., Greeks from Corinth came to Sicily and founded the city of Syracuse. The Syracuse settlers then moved onto the mainland and founded Cumae near Naples. The city of Naples was later settled in the sixth century B.C. This was the beginning of the colonization of the southeast coast of the peninsula. Greek culture spread throughout Sicily and southern Italy. The Phoenicians then followed and settled in western Sicily, founding Palermo. The Greeks became Roman allies in their battle against Etruscans and in turn the Romans supported the Greeks in Sicily in their struggle with the Phoenicians. Sicily was later annexed by the Romans, but retained most of its local autonomy. This Greek colonization has affected the culture of the Sicilians and southern Italians in many ways. Paulo Abbate, an Italian-American artist from Torrington, wrote:

> I have lived in different places. My first eighteen years were spent in the beautiful island of Sicily. A land so fruitful and so beautiful that many small nations fought for its possession. The temperate zone had also its attraction for ambitious and malicious eyes.
>
> There are records of the Assyrians and the Egyptians, the Arab nations and the Greeks. The Greeks were most obstinate people who fought hard to conquer the island. I, for one, am glad of the Greeks' conquest because they left behind systems of work and noble examples of architecture, sculpture, paintings and the minor arts. The Greeks stimulated literature in all the branches. Even at the distance of many centuries you can see Greek characteristics in some sections of Sicily and the south portion of Italy. (June 1965) [1]

The most important Greek colonies were at Syracuse, Agrigento, Selinunte, Segesta and Taormina in Sicily and at Cumae in Capania. The National Museum of Naples and museums in Palermo, Syracuse, Reggio Calabria and Paestum have excellent specimens of Greek art.

The most famous of all the Sicilian Greeks was Archimedes who was born in Syracuse around 287 B.C. Archimedes was a brilliant mathematician who discovered the principle of the lever and the principle of specific gravity (the amount of weight loss of a body when submerged in water is equal to the weight of the water displaced). Archimedes laid down the foundation of modern mathematics, including calculus.

It is believed that he was killed by a Roman soldier, against the orders of the Roman commander, when Rome invaded Syracuse in 212 B.C. A tomb was erected by the Romans which can still be visited today in Syracuse.

THE ROMAN EMPIRE

After the Romans overthrew the last Etruscan city in 295 B.C., they gradually annexed the rest of Italy until by 49 B.C. Rome ruled the Mediterranean world. Julius Caesar had plans to reorganize Italy but was assassinated before he had the chance. In 27 B.C. the Gallic province north of the Po was incorporated into the empire. The Roman empire grew and flourished under a succession of emperors until it reached the height of its glory in 160 A.D. Roads had been built, establishing good communications throughout the empire. Education was offered to all of Rome's citizens.

Under Roman rule Italy was for the first time united. Racial barriers were forgotten and all wanted to be Roman citizens. Art discovered in Pompeii shows a society of Latin social structure, Hellenistic cultural traditions and old Italic folklore.

After 160 A.D., Rome started to decline because of the weak and corrupt emperors who ruled. Military power became the tool used by emperors to take over the rule of the empire. From 235 to 285, there were twenty-two different emperors. Many Germans became mercenaries in the emperors' armies and anarchy reigned. During this time, Italy was invaded by the Goths, the Franks and the Persians.

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[1] Taken from an essay written by Paulo Abbate, an internationally known sculptor and philosopher, who lived in Torrington, Conn. until his death in 1973.

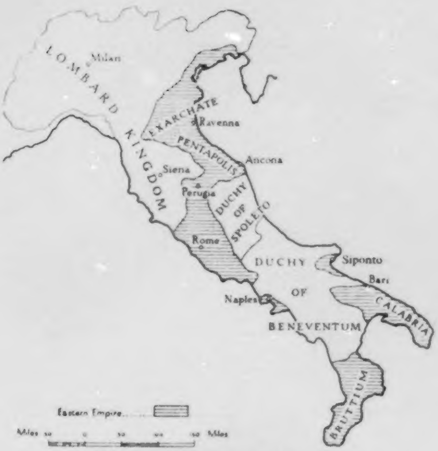
The new Christian religion was spreading throughout the empire. In the fourth century Constantine became emperor and moved the seat of the Roman Empire from Rome to Constantinople. Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire. The eastern or Byzantine culture spread throughout Italy. The differences between the eastern and western parts of the Empire became so marked that the two finally split. In 476 the last of the western emperors was deposed and Rome was overrun by Goths and Vandals. Odacer the Goth became ruler of the western half of the Roman Empire. This was the beginning of the Middle Ages.

THE MIDDLE AGES AND THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE

The Goths were succeeded by the Lombards, also a Germanic people from the Danube area, who dominated northern and central Italy from 563 to 774. They ruled as foreigners and invaders, but gradually adopted the religion of the people of Italy and by 700 there was peace between the Lombard kingdom and the Christian empire.

The Germanic people were never completely assimilated into Italian society. No trace of Germanic cultural influence can now be found. There are only about 150 words of Germanic origin in the Italian language, none of which relates to the intellectual or artistic side of life. All refer to military or practical matters. Germanic rule, with its feudal methods of agriculture, serfdom, high taxations, and the lack of cultural aspirations, left Italy economically exhausted. One positive aspect of this Lombard rule was that it stopped invasions by the Asiatics who were invading other Mediterranean countries at this time.

Only the maritime republics of Venice, Amalfi, Genoa and Pisa remained free of Germanic rule during this period.



Italy about A.D. 600[2]

When the Huns, Goths and Lombards invaded the Roman towns of the Venetian plain, the people moved onto the islands in the Adriatic, preferring isolation to political enslavement. By 800 they had created an independent confederation. Venice was the only place on the peninsula to remain free of foreign rule for fourteen centuries, from the end of the Roman Empire until 1797. Venice has always been an important part of Italian cultural life.

During the rule of the Lombards, the power of the Roman Church and of the Pope grew. The Roman and Byzantine churches clashed more and more politically. The Lombards sided with the Eastern church and in 754 Pope Stephen II of Rome invited the Frank ruler, Pepin, to invade Italy. Pepin defeated the Lombards and the Pope regained the lands of the Byzantines. The Roman Church from this time became one of the important and powerful political forces in Italy.

Pepin's son Charlemagne dreamed of unifying

---

[2] H. Hearder and D.P. Whaley (eds.), *A Short History of Italy*, Cambridge University Press, 1963, p. 31.

Europe and restoring the Roman Empire of old. Christian missionaries were sent throughout the lands. Where the Word failed, the sword was used. In 800 Charlemagne was crowned Holy Roman Emperor by Pope Leo III and Rome was once again the seat of the Empire. In 952 Germany and Italy united under a Saxon emperor, Otto I, strengthening the Holy Roman Empire. However, the Normans who had settled on France's northern border and adopted the religion and customs of the Franks, were starting to push their way south into the empire.

Meanwhile in Sicily in the 1800's, Arabs and Berbers arrived and settled permanently on the island, transforming the Greek population into a Muslim community. For almost two centuries the Arabs dominated Sicily and brought cultural and economic revival to the people. The Sicilians of Greek and Latin stock benefited greatly from the programs of land reform and trade brought by the Arabs. Arts and crafts from the Near East flourished. When the Normans arrived and conquered the island in 1015, they plunged Sicily back into medieval feudalism and undid much of the good that had been done during the peaceful Arab rule.

This Norman rule lasted until 1250. One of the most profound effects of the Norman occupation of southern Italy was the achievement of complete religious unity in Italy. The Greeks and Muslim groups converted to the Christian faith of the Normans.

While the Normans were forming the Kingdom of Sicily, the Church and the German Hohenstaufen emperors were struggling for power in central and northern Italy. The Popes had wrestled authority from the nobles of Rome and had established absolute power of the Roman state. Their ideas of ecclesiastical power brought them into conflict with the Empire. The Popes realized the need for military power to back up their spiritual power. Pope Urban II mustered up a great army of Christian soldiers for a Holy War against Islam. This was the first of the Crusades. The real purpose of the Crusades was to unify Christian Europe under one cause and thus build up the authority of the Church in affairs of the state.

It was because of this controversy between Church and Empire that the city-states of northern and central Italy emerged. The people claimed the right of self-government. The Emperor granted charters to many cities in order to gain their support against the Papal states. The most powerful of the city-states were the maritime republics of Genoa, Pisa and Venice.

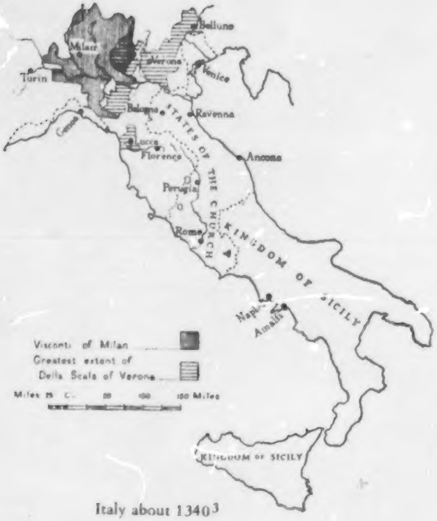
During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the Popes continued to struggle with the Hohenstaufen emperors for control of Italy. In 1186 Sicily became part of the Empire through the marriage of a Hohenstaufen to the last Norman heir to the throne of Sicily.

Later, in 1261 when a Frenchman became Pope Urban IV, Charles d'Anjou, at the Pope's invitation, invaded Sicily. Urban IV had hoped to strengthen the Papal position in southern Italy. However, the people revolted against the French rule with the help of the King of Aragon. The revolt was triggered by the harassment of a Sicilian woman by the French soldiers outside of a church. Hundreds of French were massacred and the cry "death to the French" was heard throughout the land.

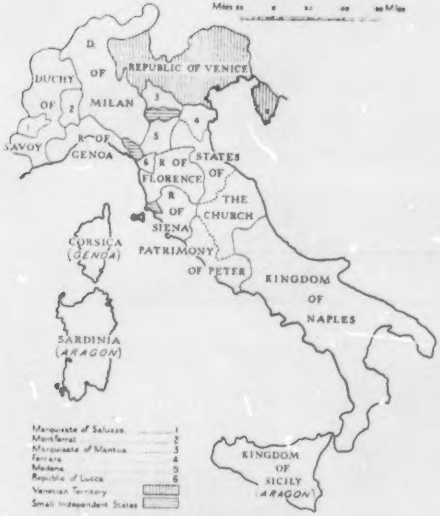
The revolt was successful and the King of Aragon made himself master of Sicily and Sardinia. The French House of Angevin then established its rule in Naples. The Kingdom of the Two Sicilies was torn between the French and Spanish rulers which kept it illiterate, poor and detached from the rest of Italy until 1860. The Sicilians resorted to an organized system of retaliation in order to survive, forming small bands called *mafie*.

The French Angevin then moved up from Naples through the central and northern regions of Italy with the support of the Popes and became the uncontested political rulers of Italy.

For the next five hundred years Italy remained a pawn in the struggle between the French, the Spanish and the Church. It wasn't until


Milan
Turin
Verona
Belluno
Venice
Genoa
Bologna
Ravenna
Lucca
Florence
Ancona
Perugia
Rome
STATES OF THE CHURCH
KINGDOM OF SICILY
Naples
Amalfi
Visconti of Milan
Greatest extent of Della Scala of Verona
Miles 25 0 50 100 150 Miles
KINGDOM OF SICILY

Italy about 1340[3]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D. OF MILAN
DUCHY OF SAVOY
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R OF GENOA
R OF FLORENCE
STATES OF THE CHURCH
R OF SIENA
PATRIMONY OF PETER
CORSICA (GENOA)
SARDINIA (ARAGON)
KINGDOM OF NAPLES
KINGDOM OF SICILY (ARAGON)
Marquisate of Saluzzo 1
Montferrat 2
Marquisate of Mantua 3
Ferrara 4
Modena 5
Republic of Lucca 6
Venetian Territory
Small Independent States

Italy in 1454[3]

3. H. Hearder and D.P. Whaley (eds.), *A Short History of Italy*, Cambridge University Press, 1963, pp. 59, 77.

1861 that Italy was finally united under one ruler.

It is truly remarkable that in spite of all this turmoil and political division, Italy became the leader of the rest of Europe in matters of art and scientific achievement.

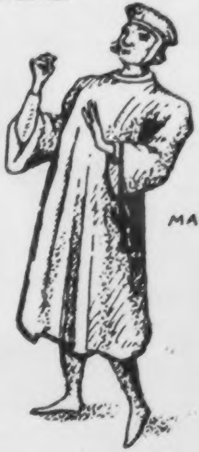
RENAISSANCE

During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries many important changes were occurring. A middle class started to develop. The people of medieval times had been divided into two classes–nobles and peasants. As the Renaissance approached, the line between the classes was less apparent. New classes appeared which included artisans, shopkeepers, merchants and money lenders. Guilds came into existence. Feudal laws and customs were replaced by statutory legislation without personalistic distinction. Two political parties arose: the Guelfs, who supported the Pope and opposed the intervention of the empire in Italian affairs; and the Ghibellines who formed the lay opposition to the intervention of the Church in temporal affairs. These two parties divided the city-states, one from the other and also internally. One of the important Guelf families of Tuscany was named Gherardini. Mona Lisa La Gioconda was a descendant of this family. Several of the Gherardini migrated to Ireland in the twelfth century and began the famous Fitzgerald family.[4]

The Italian people of the thirteenth century were starting to think about art and literature. A renewed interest in the classics developed. Man was awakening from the Dark and Middle Ages. The Florentine charter of 1293 gave artists the same constitutional rights as those granted to physicians and other representatives of higher learning.

At this time several Christian sects sprang up out of the conflict between evangelical ideals of humility and poverty and the reality of the rich corrupt powerful Church of Rome. Labelled heretics by the Pope, these reformers were severely persecuted, but their doctrines spread throughout Italy. The persecution of these reformers was the start of the Inquisition in Italy.

The five principle city-states of the fourteenth century were Naples, the Papal States, Venice, Florence and Milan. Venice became the focal point of commerce. She had the dominant sea power of the day and controlled all of the trade from the East. Marco Polo sailed from Venice to the Far East and after seventeen years brought back many ideas and treasures from China and the courts of Ghenghis Khan. He wrote an account of his adventures which is called *Il Milione.*



MARCO POLO

Florence became the leading commercial and financial center of Europe. Florentine wool was marketed throughout the continent. Florence's wealth brought about great achievements in art and science. Milan was growing as an industrial center and becoming very powerful under the rule of the Visconti family. A great flurry of intellectual activity began. This was also a time of almost constant war between the city-states that were involved with the struggle between French and Spanish domination.

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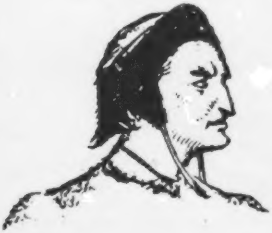
[4] Luis Marden, "The Renaissance Lives on in Tuscany," *The National Geographic*, Vol. 146, No. 5, November 1974, pp. 626-659.

A split in the Guelf party further divided Florence into two factions—the Blacks and the Whites. Dante Alighieri was a leader of the White Party, who opposed Papal authority in Florence because of the corruption of the Church. The Blacks triumphed in 1301 while Dante was absent from the city. His property was confiscated and he was sentenced to death. Dante remained in exile for the rest of his life. It was during this period of exile that he wrote *La Commedia* (The Divine Comedy). This was the first significant work written in the Italian language. Before that time Latin was used as the literary language. Dante is known as the Father of the Italian language. During his exile, he traveled to various parts of Italy and found that it would be possible to achieve a national unity among Italian people if there was a common language.



DANTE

Soon others were writing in Italian. St. Francis of Assisi wrote beautiful poetry. Petrarca wrote love sonnets. He is called "the first modern man" and the precursor of the Renaissance in Florence because he revived the study of the classics. Boccaccio wrote the first prose romance in Italian (*Il Filocolo*) and the first Italian idyll (*Il Ninfale Fielsolano*). Boccaccio is most well known for his work *Il Decameron*, a series of one hundred stories that show every aspect of social life in Italy in the 1300's.

In 1434 the first of the great Medici family came into power in Florence. Cosimo was a patron of the arts and created the first public library in Florence. For sixty years the Medici ruled the city during the golden age of Florence. The Medici made their city the cultural center of Europe. In this environment artists were free to develop their own styles and expressions and were given assistance and encouragement by the nobility. Into this age were born Leonardo, Michelangelo, Cellini, Giotto, Ucello, Donatello and many, many more.[5] Machiavelli wrote the most famous political pamphlet of that time, *The Prince*, in which he gives advice to the Medici on how to drive the Spaniards and French from Italian soil.

The Renaissance was set back somewhat during the rule of Savonarola, a fanatic Dominican friar, who preached fire and brimstone and tried to revive religion. For four years (1494 - 1498) Savonarola tyranized Florence, burning books, painting and other worldly goods which he called "vanities". After four years of this religious sacking, the people of Florence turned against Savonarola and he was hanged and burned in the main square. The Medici family was brought back as unofficial rulers of Florence.

Although it was Florence that led the rest of Italy in artistic revival and achievement, other centers produced many fine crafts. Venetian stonemasons created beautiful marble facades, mosiacs and inlays, as well as the most perfect glasswares. The local architects made Venice one of the most beautiful cities in all of Italy.

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[5] It should be noted that famous Italians are sometimes referred to by their first name only (Dante, Michelangelo), sometimes by their last name only (Cellini, Machiavelli), and sometimes by their first name plus their place of origin (Leonardo da Vinci). The names by which these people are commonly known also vary according to the culture. Thus in Italy, for example, Leonardo da Vinci is referred to as simply Leonardo.

Milan excelled in the making of iron objects from the ore that was mined nearby. Brescia became famous for woodcarvings and the Lombard sculptors produced fine stone art objects. Other northern Italian cities made decorative bronze castings.

In southern Italy an art form combining small pieces of colored marble and stained glass and gilt cubes was developed. Sicily, from the eleventh century, was famous for mosiac painting.

THE AGE OF THE EXPLORERS

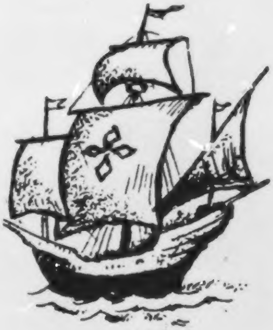
Many of the famous Italian explorers were born in the fifteenth century. Their spirit of adventure and thirst for knowledge were indeed of Italian origin, however, none ever sailed under Italian auspices or received a commission from Italy. Among the most well known of the explorers of this time are Christopher Columbus, Giovanni Caboto, Amerigo Vespucci and Giovanni da Verrazzano.

Christopher Columbus

Columbus is belived to have been born in Genoa around 1451. When he settled in Spain he changed his name to Christopher Colon and his trips to the New World were financed by Spain. On August 3, 1492, Columbus left Spain on his first voyage and ten weeks later sighted land, San Salvador. In the next twelve years, he made three more voyages. On his last trip, Columbus touched the mainland of Central America in 1502-4. Although the Norsemen and perhaps others had explored the coast of North America earlier, Europeans did not know that the American continent existed. In this respect Columbus' exploration was the most significant.

Giovanni Caboto

Cabot, as he is called in English, was also born in Genoa around 1450, but is considered a Venetian. He left Genoa and went to England and in 1496 Henry VII granted him letters to voyage across the Atlantic. Cabot left Bristol on May 2, 1497 and sighted land on June 24. It is not known exactly what land he sighted. He returned to England to get five more ships to return to the New World for further exploration. They left Bristol in May 1498. One ship soon returned to England and the other four, including Cabot's ship, were never heard of again.



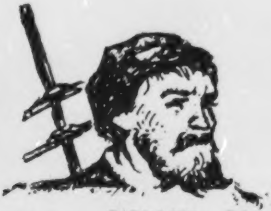
SANTA MARIA

Amerigo Vespucci

Vespucci was born in Florence in 1454. He was an agent of the Medici bankers and was sent to live in Seville, Spain. While there, his interests turned to exploration and in May 1499 Vespucci sailed to America for Spain. Later, from May 1501 to July 1502, he sailed for Portugal and discovered the Bay of Rio de Janeiro.

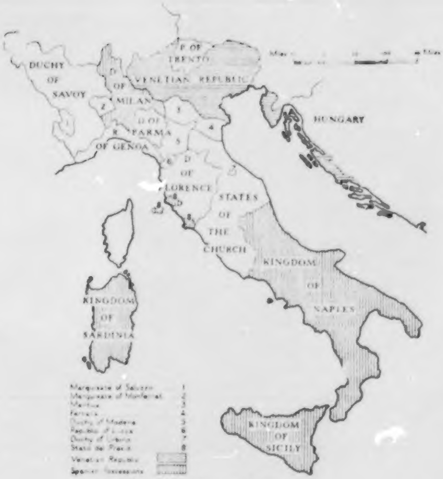
Giovanni da Verrazzano

Giovanni da Verrazzano was a navigator born near Florence in 1485. He then moved to Dieppe, France in 1506 and was commissioned by France to pirate Spanish ships. In 1508 Verrazzano sailed to Newfoundland. He returned to France and obtained support from Francis I to search for a route to the Orient. In 1524 Verrazzano sailed on the *Dauphine* and sighted land at Cape Fear, North Carolina. He then sailed north and entered New York Harbor on April 17. On July 8 he returned to France. It is believed that Verrazzano was hanged by the Spanish for piracy. Other sources say that he was killed by Caribbean Indians in Guadeloupe in 1528 on his third trip to the New World.


GIOVANNI DA
VERRAZZANO

THE PERIOD OF FOREIGN DOMINATION

About the time America was being explored for the first time by Europeans, a period of foreign invasions began in Italy. France and Spain were still fighting for control of Italy. But in the midst of all the struggles of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Italy became a light for the rest of Europe in matters of art and intellectual activity.


DUCHY OF SAVOY
P. OF TRENTO
VENETIAN REPUBLIC
D. OF MILAN
D. OF PARMA
R. OF GENOA
D. OF FLORENCE
STATES OF THE CHURCH
HUNGARY
KINGDOM OF NAPLES
KINGDOM OF SARDINIA
KINGDOM OF SICILY
Marquisate of Saluzzo 1
Marquisate of Monferrat 2
Mantua 3
Ferrara 4
Duchy of Modena 5
Republic of Lucca 6
Duchy of Urbino 7
Stato dei Presidi 8
Venetian Republic
Spanish Possessions

Italy in 1559[6]

In 1559, after almost three hundred years of war between France and Spain, a treaty was made wherein France gave up her immediate claims in Italy. The Duchy of Savoy was also reinstated as undisputed ruler of the Piedmont, after years of French domination, Charles V became King of Sicily, Naples and Milan. The Spanish domination of Italy lasted for almost two hundred years, until 1713. This was a period of oppression and little political activity in Italy. It was the era of the Inquisition when Italians were forced to flee the country because of their opinions, an era of restrictions on printing and study. Italy, however, was still producing many great people in the areas of science, art and music. The first significant opera was

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6. H. Hearder and D.P. Whaley (eds.), *A Short History of Italy*, Cambridge University Press, 1963, p. 96.

written in the seventeenth century by Monteverdi. Galileo Galilei of Pisa (1564-1642) was the first astronomer to effectively use the telescope. His discoveries in mechanics laid the foundation for Newton's theories. He was the main founder of the experimental-mathematical method which has characterized modern scientific thought. Galileo first used the pendulum to measure time. He was imprisoned by the Inquisition for a while but died a free man. During this period a man named Giordano Bruno conceived the universe as an infinite plurality of worlds. He was labelled a heretic and perished at the stake. Marcello Malpighi (1628-1694) discovered the capillary action of blood.

During this period of Spanish domination the cities lost their remnants of independence. Even Venice was on the decline, having lost her territories of Cypress and Crete to the Turks.

With the death of the last Hapsburg king of Spain in 1700, France claimed the Spanish throne. A struggle followed. Savoy, which controlled the Alpine passes between France and Spanish-ruled Milan, became the leading state in Italy. The outcome of this struggle was the Peace of Utrecht in 1713 which established the Austrian Hapsburgs in control of most of Italy. Emperor Charles VI of Austria ruled Milan, Mantua, Naples and Sardinia. The Duke of Savoy was awarded the island of Sicily with the title of King. A few years after the Peace of Utrecht, the Duke of Savoy was forced to give up Sicily to Austria in exchange for Sardinia. The Dukes of Savoy then became the kings of Sardinia. They held this title until the unification of Italy under Garibaldi in 1860, at which time they became the Kings of Italy. In 1748 Sardinia expanded its boundaries to include Nice and Savoy. Spain had recaptured Naples and Sicily from Austria. King Charles III of Naples and his descendants remained on the throne until the kingdom was surrendered to Garibaldi.

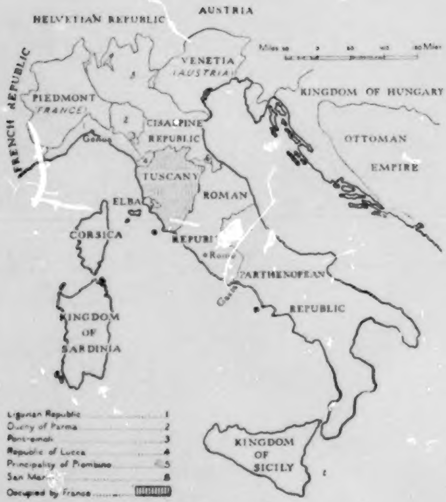
In Florence the last of the House of Medici died and Tuscany passed to Francis of Lorraine who later became emperor of Austria.

The last half of the 1770's was relatively peaceful in Italy. French revolutionary thought was being introduced into the country. Social reforms were badly needed. Enormous wealth lay in the hands of a select few, while the masses were living in misery. The extravagances of the wealthy were only possible at the expense of the poor masses. Seeing the handwriting on the wall, a series of reforms were introduced by the foreign rulers who wanted to avoid a revolution. In Milan a land tax was fixed which made possible extensive cultivation. Lombardy became the most prosperous province in Italy. Some church possessions were taxed and church privileges and exemptions were abolished.

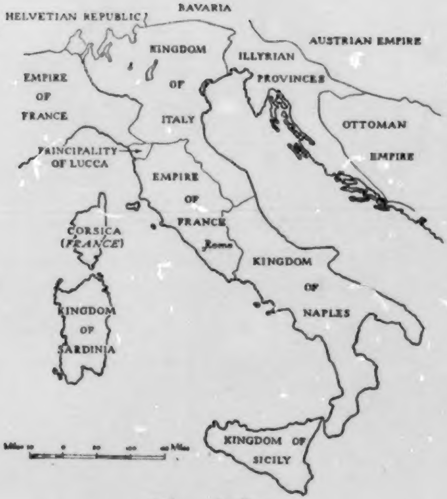
In Tuscany, free trade and equality of taxation were introduced. Prison reforms and church reforms were made. Torture and the death penalty were abolished.

The King of Naples also tried to introduce many reforms. The people of southern Italy, where a medieval feudal system still existed, were the worst off. The Church owned half of the land and the poor masses had to bear the burden. Church and state were in constant conflict over the subject of taxation. The most important reform made was the right of the peasants to sell their produce directly on the open market, rather than to their feudal lord for much less.

During the late 1700's French revolutionary forces were at work and French agents were to be found everywhere in Italy. When the French revolution broke out in 1789, several Italian city-states tried to join in the coalition against France. But Napoleon invaded Italy and crushed all resistence. Italy became a French dependency. The Treaty of Campo in 1797 gave Venice to Austria and divided the rest of Italy into five republics: Milan, Genoa, Rome, Bologna and Naples. After 1800 Napoleon changed Italy into a kingdom and crowned himself King of Italy. He made his stepson


HELVETIAN REPUBLIC
AUSTRIA
FRENCH REPUBLIC
VENETIA
(AUSTRIA)
KINGDOM OF HUNGARY
PIEDMONT
(FRANCE)
CISALPINE
REPUBLIC
Genoa
OTTOMAN
EMPIRE
TUSCANY
ROMAN
ELBA
CORSICA
REPUBLIC
Roma
PARTHENOPEAN
REPUBLIC
Gaeta
KINGDOM
OF
SARDINIA
KINGDOM
OF
SICILY
Miles
Ligurian Republic 1
Duchy of Parma 2
Pontremoli 3
Republic of Lucca 4
Principality of Piombino 5
San Marino 6
Occupied by France

Italy in 1798[7]


HELVETIAN REPUBLIC
BAVARIA
AUSTRIAN EMPIRE
KINGDOM
OF
ITALY
ILLYRIAN
PROVINCES
EMPIRE
OF
FRANCE
OTTOMAN
EMPIRE
PRINCIPALITY
OF LUCCA
EMPIRE
OF
FRANCE
CORSICA
(FRANCE)
Roma
KINGDOM
OF
NAPLES
KINGDOM
OF
SARDINIA
KINGDOM OF
SICILY
Miles

Italy in 1810[7]

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[7] H. Hearder and D.P. Whaley (eds.), *A Short History of Italy*, Cambridge University Press, 1963, pp. 112, 116.

Viceroy of Italy, his brother-in-law King of Naples, and his son King of Rome. The Pope was kidnapped and held until Napoleon's downfall in 1814.

Napoleon was a despot, however, during his fourteen-year reign of Italy many improvements were made. The feudal system was swept away and all citizens, rich or poor, were equalized before the law. Napoleon revived the spirit of the Italian people after so many torpid years following the Renaissance. He reorganized the country and taught the men how to fight and to have pride in themselves. The people for the first time began to think of themselves as Italians and the outlines of a national purpose began to emerge.

After Napoleon's defeat, the Congress of Vienna in 1814 left most of Italy under Austrian or Papal rule. The House of Savoy was restored to Sardinia and the Bourbons under Ferdinand controlled the Two Kingdoms of Sicily.

THE RISE OF NATIONALISM AND THE UNIFICATION OF ITALY

The wish for unity and freedom was growing strong and secret societies sprang up. The most important of these societies was called Young Italy, founded by Mazzini while in exile from Italy. Mazzini's aim was to liberate Italy from Austrian rule and unify the country under a republican form of government seated at Rome. He believed that education was the key to self-government and set a high moral standard of conduct before the youth. He taught Italians to rely on their own strength rather than on foreign powers. Mazzini's teachings reached the middle class.

The period 1831 to 1846 saw the rise of nationalism and the appearance of patriotic literature. The historical novel with political purpose started to interest the upper classes as well in the cause of nationalism. The most beloved of the novels was *I Promessi Sposi* (The Betrothed) by Manzoni. Because of its beautiful style of writing, this book is still studied by every school child today in Italy.

Verdi wrote *The Lombards of the First Crusade* and Rossini wrote *William Tell*, both with patriotic themes. Poets glorified liberty and justice.

A new political party was formed which opposed the violent methods of reform preached by Young Italy. The "Reformisti" believed in cooperation between ruler and people. Another group called the "Albertisti" arose. They believed that Austria must be driven out and that Charles Albert, the new King of Sardinia, was the real hope of Italy.

At this time a new Pope was elected who was a reformer. Three reforms were granted in the Papal States—freedom of the press, a *consulta* or citizens' council, and a civic guard. Public demands in other states followed these reforms. Charles Albert issued a long list of reforms. The King of Sicily granted a constitution and Sardinia, Tuscany and then Rome followed suit.

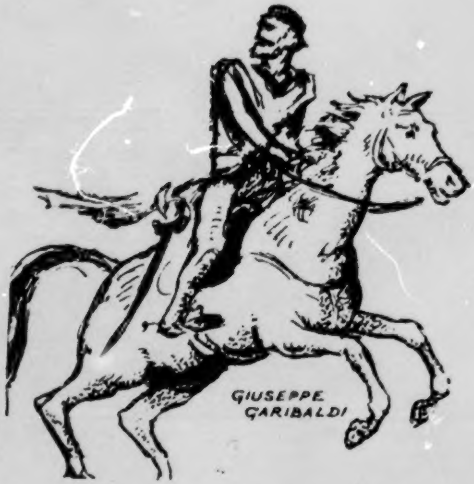
In 1848 a wave of uprisings swept through Europe and Italy. Milan rose up against the Austrians and drove them from their city. Venice and Naples granted constitutional rights to the people. However, the Pope joined with Austria and together they squelched the revolution. The first war for independence had been lost.

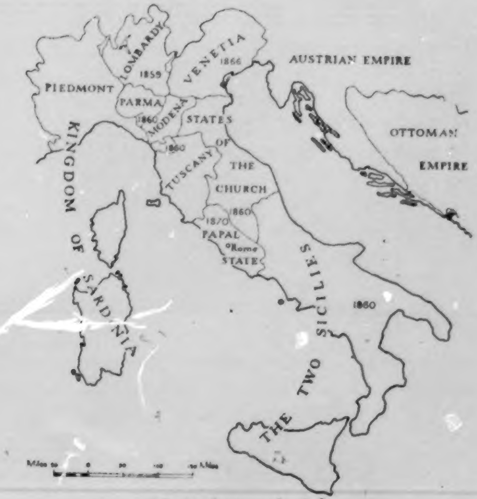
The son of Charles Albert, Victor Emmanuel II, came to the throne of Sardinia. He was sympathetic to the cause of independence and secured France's aid to throw off Austrian rule. As a reward for this aid, France received Nice and Savoy.

Tuscany, Modena, Parma and Romagna declared for annexation to Victor Emmanuel's Kingdom of Sardinia. One of Mazzini's followers, Giuseppe Garibaldi, the most loved Italian hero, gathered together a volunteer army of one thousand men, called Garibaldi's "red shirts", and led an expedition resulting in the conquest of Sicily and Naples. The Kingdom of the Two

Sicilies was added to Sardinia and Victor Emmanuel was proclaimed King of Italy in 1861. Later Venice was added and only Rome remained. Garibaldi tried to take the city, but the French came to the aid of the Pope. In 1870, after the French troops had withdrawn, Victor Emmanuel entered Rome and made it the capital of all his dominions. The Papal States became part of unified Italy and the Pope lost all political power.

The constitutional monarchy of Victor Emmanuel extended to all of Italy. The King was the supreme executive power but acted on the advice of a minister. There was a Parliament composed of two Chambers: a Senate, consisting of men over forty elected by the King; and the Chamber of Deputies, elected every five years by literate men over twenty-one.


GIUSEPPE
GARIBALDI


LOMBARDY
1859
VENETIA
1866
AUSTRIAN EMPIRE
PIEDMONT
PARMA
1860
MODENA
STATES
OF
THE
CHURCH
1860
TUSCANY
KINGDOM OF SARDINIA
OTTOMAN
EMPIRE
1860
1870
PAPAL
Rome
STATES
THE TWO SICILIES
1860
Miles

The Unification of Italy[8]

One man who did as much for the unification of Italy as Garibaldi and Victor Emmanuel, was the brilliant statesman Count Cavour who was Minister of Commerce and then Minister of Finance for Victor Emmanuel. It was his maneuvering that brought France's aid against Austria. He is regarded as one of the greatest patriots of Italian history. Cavour died before the complete unification of Italy was accomplished.

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[8] H. Hearder and D.P. Whaley (eds.), *A Short History of Italy,* Cambridge University Press, 1963, p. 158.

ITALY
1870 - 1915

Living conditions deteriorated during the fight for independence. Poverty, bad harvests and cholera took their toll. As a result, the monarchy was discredited and republicanism grew.

In 1876 the Left wing came into power. They revealed a tendency to split into factions. The people were unhappy with social conditions and violence and crime spread. The government became corrupt.

King Victor Emmanuel died and his son Humbert became King. In 1882 Italy signed a Triple Alliance with Germany and Austria. The results were two-fold. On the one hand, Italy was guaranteed safety from attack by Austria or Germany. But on the other hand France imposed prohibitive export taxes on Italy's trade. This was a great economic burden to the struggling new country.

Socialism was gaining a foothold. Laborers rebelled. A socialist group of intellectuals, believing in the legal methods of reform, gained much influence. The government tried to suppress socialism through decree which caused rioting by the anarchists and an attempt on the life of King Humbert. By the beginning of the twentieth century, Italy was in chaos. In half of the provinces the military had replaced the civil government. In 1900 King Humbert was assassinated. The government again changed hands and a strong premier named Giolitti came into power. Victor Emmanuel III became King. Under Giolitti Italy started to make some progress. He instituted much social legislation. The treasury had a balance for the first time. Industry was growing due to the development of hydro-electric power. Foreign trade rose. Wages were increased and material conditions were generally improved.

It was during this difficult period of unification and economic distress that thousands of Italians, particularly from the Mezzogiorno (Italian peninsula south of Rome), emigrated to Argentina and Brazil and then by the end of the 1800's to the United States. Overpopulation and impoverished soil in the south had inflated the labor supply and caused low wages, hunger and extreme poverty. The south of Italy had always been worse off than central and northern Italy. By the turn of the century it was barely possible to subsist. According to the 1921 *Statistical Abstract of the U.S.*, more Italians immigrated to the U. S. in the decade 1901-1910 than in the following decade. However, the years 1913 and 1914 were the years of the heaviest Italian immigration.

EMBLEM
OF THE
REPUBLIC OF ITALY

Emigration affected Italy in many ways, both good and bad. The first and most obvious effects seemed to be good. Overpopulation, especially in the south, had created more of a supply than a demand for workers. Working conditions and wages were intolerable. When the Italian men learned of the need for workers in America at ten times the pay, they came to the United States to seek their fortunes. Soon money started to flow back into their homeland, sent back by the men who had left their families there.

In addition, the labor forces had dwindled in the agricultural areas, so the demand for workers increased and so did the wages. Even those who never left Italy benefitted financially from emigration.

Another immediate benefit was the creation of self respect and a feeling of hope among those workers who stayed in Italy. Their labors were appreciated a little more by their employers. At last they had a bargaining tool.

The importance of education among the laboring class was greatly increased. Most of the emigrants were illiterate. But when they saw the rewards of being able to read and write in America, they insisted that their children left at home in Italy all be sent to school.

Emigration also resulted in a change in land ownership in the Mezzogiorno. The emigrant lived modestly and saved in the United States in order to be able to send most of his earnings back to Italy to buy a small piece of land. Little by little the *contadini* (peasants) started to own much of the land previously held by the land barons.

The adverse effects of emigration were slower to appear. Due to the loss of the working force, particularly in Sicilia, Abruzzi, Calabria and Publia, there was less food produced and a decrease in export trade developed.

One of the worst effects was the breaking up of the family unit. Women and children, left without their husbands and fathers, began to experience many difficulties. Prostitution grew and the children were difficult to control because they lacked the discipline that had been provided by their fathers.

Another menace was the spreading of tuberculosis, contracted in the slums of the cities in the United States and brought back to Italy where it was previously unknown. Many of the Italian laborers in the United States returned to Italy during the slack seasons. At the beginning of the mass emigrations to America, there was a lot of two-way traffic. However, as the years passed and Italians found a place for themselves and started to prosper in the United States, there were fewer and fewer returning to Italy.[9]

Although the early 1900's was the period of the heaviest emigration, there are still many who come each year from Italy to try to make a better life for themselves.

ITALY IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

In the early 1900's a movement towards imperialism emerged in Italy and socialism declined. Italy went to war against Turkey for control of Tripoli, where many Italians were living. Relations with Austria were deteriorating. In 1914 when war broke out in Europe, in spite of the Triple Alliance with Austria, Italy tried to remain neutral. This, however, was impossible. In 1915 Italy signed a treaty with the Allies and declared war on Austria.

Italy was totally unprepared for war, militarily and financially, and suffered enormous casualties on the Austrian front. France and England sent troops to help halt the Austrian invasion and in 1918 the Allies defeated Austria in a final victory at the battle of Vittorio Veneto. An armistice was signed and the Peace Conference opened in Paris. Italy, after a long struggle to substantiate her claims, emerged from the resettlement of Europe with a slight increase in territory. The northern boundary was extended to include the Brenner Pass (Trento), the Julian Alps, Trieste, Julian Venetia, Istria and Pola, as well as Fiume on the Adriatic. Italy felt some bitterness about the settlement for England had gained two and a half million square miles and France one million square miles. Italy only gained one hundred thousand square miles, mostly African desert.

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[9] Antonio Mangano, "The Effect of Emigration Upon Italy," *A Documentary History of the Italian Americans*, edited by Wayne Moquin, Praeger Press, New York, 1974.

After the war Italy was again suffering economic problems. Socialism came under Russian influence. A wave of violence and labor strikes paralyzed the country. The government was incapable of correcting the problems. A new group arose under the leadership of Mussolini; it was made up of ex-soldiers and patriots full of enthusiasm to crush the "reds" and they soon increased in number.

The big manufacturers, also anxious to remove the socialist influence from Italy, financed the *Fasci* party. They quickly won over the upper and middle classes, as well as the military. In 1921 Mussolini entered Parliament when the Fascists won thirty-five seats in the May elections. The Nationalist Fascist Party was officially begun and Mussolini introduced his program of social reform, rigid economy at home, national prestige abroad, financial equilibrium, the cessation of strikes and labor arbitration courts.

In 1922 the King invited Mussolini to form a cabinet. Mussolini destroyed the other political parties and ruled the land with an iron hand. He abolished freedom of the press. Every phase of life, including pleasure and recreation was controlled by the government. Mussolini recognized the importance of good relations with the Church to fortify his power. Agreements were made that created a Vatican State in absolute possession of the Holy See. The Church, for the very first time, recognized the Kingdom of Italy under the House of Savoy. Catholicism was made the State religion.

Rivalry between France and Italy was growing. Gradually Italy shifted its allegiance from the Allies to Germany, due in part to the bitterness created by the settlement of World War I. In 1936 the Axis was formed. This term meant that all of the states of Europe should rotate around the policies of Rome and Berlin. Germany and Italy had united first to help Franco in Spain during the civil war. Then Germany invaded and annexed Austria. Italy attacked Albania. Germany invaded Poland and then France. When the German army entered Paris and victory was assured, Mussolini declared war on France.

Meanwhile in Italy, because of the growing shortage of goods, economic difficulties, and social unrest, the Fascist Party was losing the confidence of the people. Mussolini was forced to resign and was imprisoned. The new premier, Badoglio, formed an armistice with the Allies and declared war on Germany in 1943. Allied forces landed at Salerno and began the liberation of Italy.

Mussolini was rescued by German paratroopers and fled to the north of Italy while the monarchy ruled in the south. The Allied armies advanced and occupied Rome. Meanwhile, throughout Italy partisan groups in liaison with the Allies were formed. These resistance groups grew in strength and liberated Milan, Genoa and Turin. Mussolini was caught, arrested and hung in 1945. Germany surrendered. Because of Italy's earlier alliance with Germany, she lost all claims in Africa and Trieste.

In 1946 a referendum defeated the monarchy, King Humbert II went into exile and Italy became a democratic republic. The elections of June 2, 1946, the first in Italy in which women had a right to vote, set up a Constituent Assembly with an elected provisional head. A constitution was drawn up and the elections gave the Catholic party, the Christian Democrats, absolute majority. The party leader, De Gasperi, remained Prime Minister until 1953. In 1955 Italy joined the United Nations and in 1957 the Common Market.

Political life in Italy has been plagued by the splitting up of the larger parties into many factions. There are a great number of political parties in existence today, but only a few of them are powerful. Almost all of the governments formed have been coalition governments. strongest in Italy until 1962 when the first center-left government under Fanfani and then Moro was constituted. The Christian Democrats are socialistic, in sympathy with the Church and believe in strong unity with the West. Under the administrations of Fanfani and

Moro, many social reforms were enacted. One of the most important was the establishment of eight years of compulsory education.

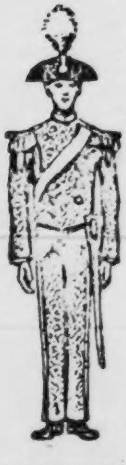
Other anti-communist parties formed in Italy after 1948 were the Social Democrats, the Liberals, the Republicans and the Action Party. In 1964 the Social Democrats became the major party. The Communist Party has become the second strongest party in Italy. However, the Italian brand of Communism is more the philosophy of social reforms than the strict oppressive form of government found in countries "behind the Iron Curtain." The Italian spirit is much too independent to tolerate such authoritarianism. In recent years a new Neo-Fascist Party was organized.

In 1970 one of the major social reforms passed by the Parliament was the legalization of divorce. A referendum in 1974 again voted three to two to keep divorce, much to the dismay of the Church.

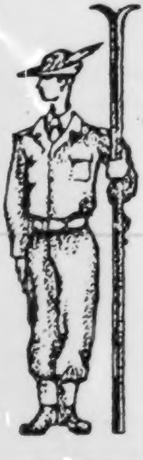
1974 was a difficult year for Italy. A wave of Neo-Fascist terrorism rocked the country. Six people were killed and sixty injured by a bombing at an anti-Fascist rally in Brescia in May. Neo-Fascists also claimed responsibility for bombing a train in August in which twelve people were killed.

The economy suffered 20 per cent inflation. The high price of fuel raised the trade deficit to $9 billion. Outstanding international debts totalled $20 billion and the government was forced to take drastic steps. A 50 per cent surcharge was placed on all imports except raw materials. This was opposed by other members of the Common Market, but was deemed legal because of the near bankruptcy of Italy. Taxes on luxury items, gasoline, property and beef were levied. Even these extreme measures failed to rescue the economy. Italy borrowed a total of almost $5 billion from the Common Market loan pool, the International Monetary Fund and West Germany.

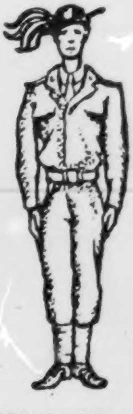
On the political scene, Prime Minister Rumor formed a new coalition government from the Socialist, the Christian Democrat and the Social Democrat parties. This was the thirty-sixth Italian government formed since World War II. This coalition, shaky to begin with because of economic problems, collapsed in October. In November Moro formed a new government.



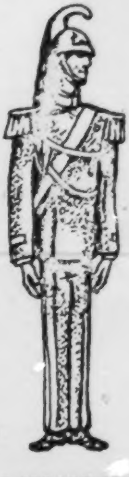
"CARABINIERE"
CIVIL AND MILITARY
POLICE FORCE



"ALPINO"
MOUNTAIN
TROUPS



"BERSAGLIERE"
LIGHT INFANTRY



"CORAZZIERE"
PRESIDENTIAL
GUARDS

INDUSTRY AND EXPORTS

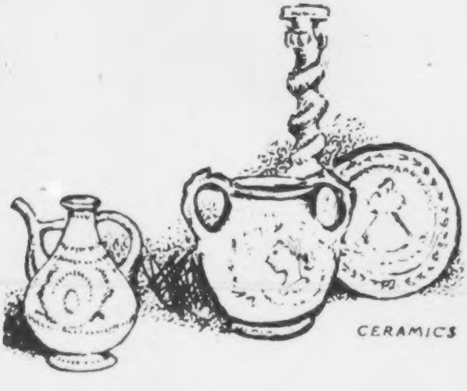
Italy is famous throughout the world for many beautiful handmade items. Foreign trade has greatly increased in the last twenty years, helping to boost the economy of the country.

The ceramic industry dates from Etruscan and Greek times. Today the most important ceramic centers are Florence, Perugia, Assisi, Pesaro and Vietri.

Italy is also noted for marble and alabaster sculpting. Carrara is well known for the pure white marble which it has quarried since the time of Michelangelo. Wood carving is found in Venice, Cortina d'Anpezzo, Piacenza, Sicily and Sorrento. Exquisite embroidery is done throughout the country. Italian violins made in Cremona, birthplace of Stradivarius, are famous all over the world.

Italians also excel in the creation of fine jewelry. Florence has been an important center of goldsmiths and silversmiths since before the Renaissance. Coral and cameos are typical products of southern Italy. Venice is known for its colorful blown glass.

Italy also makes and exports delicious cheeses and fine wines, such as Chianti, Valpolicella and Lacryma Christi.



Other important industries include the automobile (Fiat, Ferrari, Lancia, Alfa-Romeo, Lamborghini), typewriters and office machines (Olivetti), sewing machines (Necchi), motor scooters (Vespa and Lambretta) and textiles. Fine silks are produced in the Como region in northern Italy. Florence is famous for superb leather products.

Italian fashion designers such as Pucci, Simonetta, Valentino, and Nina Ricci are among the world's greatest.

Shipbuilding is also one of the important industries of Italy. The main centers for shipbuilding are Genoa, Trieste, La Spezia and Castellamare, south of Naples.

All movie goers are acquainted with the name of Fellini. The area around Rome has become very important in the film industry and most of the "spaghetti westerns" of recent years have been filmed there.

EDUCATION

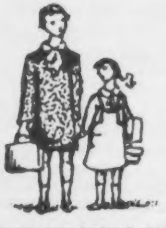
Education in Italy is mostly all public and is compulsory through the eighth grade. The first step towards nationalizing education was taken in 1877 when the Coppino Law made education compulsory for three years, ages six to nine. In 1904 the compulsory years were increased to age twelve and later to age fourteen, or eight years. In 1923 the greatest educational changes were made by Giovanni Gentile, Mussolini's Minister of Public Instruction. He believed in a stronger emphasis on reasoning and less on memorization of facts. Mussolini realized the importance of the education of Italy's youth. Fascist ideals permeated the school rooms and the text books.

After the war Italy had the difficult task of rebuilding the schools, retraining the teachers and writing new text books. But progress has been made and now it is estimated that over 90 per cent of the population can read and write.

Children may start school at the age of three in the *scuola materna* or kindergarten. This is public and is optional. Students then spend five years in elementary school, to age 11, at which time they split up according to interest and ability. Those who want to go on to higher studies then go to a three-year academic junior high school (*scuola media*) which qualifies them for either the *liceo* (academic senior high school) or the *istituto* (vocational senior high school). From the *liceo* or *istituto* a student can then choose to go to the university. State examinations are given upon completion of the *liceo* or *istituto*. The examination for the diploma to go to the university is called the *maturita* and the degree is called the *baccalaurea*. This is the U.S. equivalent of a junior college level of education. Those in the *istituto* can opt to receive the *diploma di perito*. Then they can practice their vocation. Those who go to the university earn a degree called the *laurea* which is the equivalent to a U.S. masters degree.

Those children who do not have an academic aptitude, after elementary school attend a three-year vocational junior high school (*scuola di avviamento*) and finish their compulsory education at age fourteen.

Italy has twenty-five fine universities and a number of technical schools. Tuition fees are minimal. There are also a great many schools that specialize in the study of music or art which are attended by students from all over the world. The University of Bologna, founded in the eleventh century, is one of the world's oldest universities.



... SCHOOLCHILDREN WEAR PINAFORES WITH WHITE COLLARS...

In order to give equal opportunity in education to non-Italian-speaking minority groups, special schools have been established where instruction is provided in German, French, or Slovenian. Religious instruction is provided in the public schools, but it is optional.

Italian elementary school teachers earn their diploma in the four-year program at the *istituto magistrale* and can teach school at age 17 or 18.

One Italian name that is known to every American educator is Maria Montessori. Maria was born in central Italy in 1870. She was the first woman to ever receive a medical degree in Italy. Montessori worked with mentally ill children in Rome where she developed her educational theories that are called the Montessori Method. There are over six hundred Montessori schools in the United States today.

LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Italian is a very beautiful rhythmical language that evolved from the Latin spoken by the Romans. Before the Roman domination of Italy, there were many languages spoken by the people of the peninsula: the Greeks, the Etruscans, the Celts, the various Latin peoples near Rome. When the Romans conquered Italy, France and Spain, Latin was introduced into those regions and became the official language of the empire. However, Latin was spoken quite differently in each region of the Roman Empire. As a result French, Spanish, Portuguese and Italian evolved as separate languages.

Italian penetrated the English-speaking world when the Normans ruled the British Isles. There are many Latin and Latin-based words in the English language. Some of these are: studio, opera, volcano, gusto, fresco, piano, concert, viola, corridor, umbrella. The list is endless. Of course, there are a great many Latin words used in medicine and law.

It wasn't until around 1000 A.D. that Italian appeared as a separate language. At that time the Sicilian court was the cultural center of Italy. Latin was still the literary language but the Sicilians started to write poetry in their own dialect. In the early 1200's Italian poetry was being written in the Tuscan dialect in the courts of Frederick II of Sicily. Frederick II himself was one of the main poets of the time. Two other important Sicilian poets were Cielo dal Carno and Jacopo da Lentino. The fact that Tuscan appears in Sicilian literature is further proof that it must have been the most pleasing dialect in Italy.

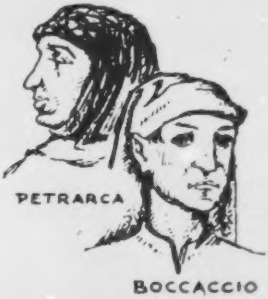
The Sicilian school of lyrical poetry was greatly influenced by the French, first through the Norman conquest and also because of the Provencal element in Frederick's court. Some of the earliest Sicilian poetry is actually a mixture of French and Italian. Among the most celebrated of the Sicilian poets of this period are Rinaldo d'Aquino, Giacomino Pugliese, Pier della Vigna, Jacopo Mostacci, Arrigo Testa and Frederick and his sons, Re Enzo and Re Federigo. Jacopo da Lentino is credited with the invention of the sonnet form.

By the end of the 1200's the Sicilian school of poetry was being replaced with that of Tuscany proper, as Florence was becoming the cultural center of Italy. St. Francis of Assisi wrote *Laudes Creaturarum* which is generally considered the first real Italian poem. This is a poem of praise to God for all His gifts to man.

It is Dante Alighieri who is really considered the father of the Italian language. When he set down the vernacular of Tuscany in his beautiful *Commedia* (Divine Comedy), Italian became a model to be used in subsequent writings. Dante knew the importance of establishing a common language as the first step in uniting the people of Italy.

Dante wrote two other noteworthy poems in Italian. The first is *La Vita Nuova* (The New Life), a collection of thirty-one love poems to Beatrice, who was his unrequited love and inspiration. The other is *Il Convivo* (The Banquet), consisting of three philosophical odes. But the *Divine Comedy* is his masterpiece. This is a long epic poem about life after death. It starts in a dense forest where Dante is lost and alone. He then meets Virgil who leads him out of the forest. Together they then travel through Hell, where Dante sees men of the past as well as his contemporary political enemies. They then go through Purgatory and on to Heaven where Beatrice is waiting to lead Dante to the throne of God. Happiness is attained through perfect human and spiritual love.

Petrarca is the second of the three main writers of the 1300's. Most of his classical and historical writings are in Latin. But when he met Laura, his great love, Petrarca turned to Italian for the full expression of his emotions. Petrarca's sonnets to Laura are among the most passionate ever written in Italian.



The other important early Italian writer is Giovanni Boccaccio who is called the first modern novelist. His first work is *Filocopo,* a long romantic novel in prose. He also wrote *Ameto* and *Fiammetta,* pastoral romances that involved the interweaving of several stories. Boccaccio is most famous for *Il Decamerone.* This is a collection of stories told by ten people during ten days. The ten people have escaped from the Black Plague epidemic in Florence and are entertaining each other in their comfortable retreat. Boccaccio also wrote some minor poems.

From Boccaccio's time until the present there are many names that stand forth in Italian writing but it would be impossible to mention every one. There are, however, a few that are the most important in the development of Italian literature.

The foremost writers of the pre-Renaissance and Renaissance period, in addition to those already mentioned, are Sacchetti, Tasso, Poliziano, Ariosto and Lorenzo di Medici. Until the Renaissance, Italian was used for writing prose and poetry but history was still written in Latin. Marco Polo wrote his travel adventures in French but sometime in the early 1400's *Il Milione* was translated into Italian. Machiavelli is called the first great Italian historical and political writer who wrote in the vernacular.

Machiavelli is most well known for his political dissertation called *Il Principe* (The Prince). He believed that Italy's political problems could be solved if they rid themselves of the foreigners and in particular the mercenary soldiers. Machiavelli also wrote a *History of Florence* and the *Art of War,* a discussion of military tactics. His play, *The Mandrake,* is a comical look at life in the Renaissance and the corruption of the clergy.

Galileo Galilei was another early writer of the Italian language. His scientific works are in a clear simple style.

Moving into the eighteenth century we start to see a new trend towards nationalistic writing that continues into the next century and the period of Italy's unification. The most influential of these writers are Goldoni, Alfieri and the poet Leopardi, author of *L'Infinito* (The Infinite).

The romantic novelists of the latter half of the 1800's did much for the cause of freedom. Manzoni, the most popular author of that time, wrote *I Promessi Sposi* (The Betrothed) which is about the difficulties of life in Italy at that time. It is widely read because of the beautiful style of writing.

Other major writers of the 1800's are the poets Carducci and Pascoli, and novelist, playwright and poet D'Annunzio.

Pinocchio, a fairy tale that is enjoyed by children internationally, was written by an Italian named Carlo Collodi, who was born in Florence in the late 1800's.

Italian literature of the twentieth century reflects the problems of the country which are different than those of the nineteenth century. Pirandello wrote plays and novels about more intangible spiritual themes and values. Others wrote about the middle class and life among ordinary people. *The Leopard,* written by Tomasi di Lampedosa, is one of the most widely read novels of our time.

Quasimodo, the poet who won the Nobel prize in 1959, was born in Sicily near Syracuse but later moved to Florence. His poetry deals with contemporary events. His poem *Day After Day* was written in 1947 and discusses the horrors of war.

There was and still is a great variation of pronunciation and vocabulary among the different regions of Italy, but this difference is much less today than it was even fifty years ago. In 1963 diction was introduced into the public school curriculum. Films, television and newspapers have also helped to spread the knowledge of the official language of Italy (the Tuscan dialect).

Italian has more vowels than any other language and has no harsh consonants. There is a perfect balance between the vowels and consonants. Each syllable is enunciated and the words are almost always pronounced exactly as they are spelled. There are, however, a few key rules to remember in pronunciation. The ci or gi combination in Italian is pronounced like chee or jee in English. Ghi or chi is pronounced like gee (hard g) or key in English. The alphabet is like ours except that there is no j, k, w, x or y.

All nouns in Italian have a gender, either masculine or feminine, and, like most words in Italian, end in a vowel. For the nouns, the *o* ending denotes masculine singular. To form the plural of a masculine noun, the *o* is changed to *i*. *Uno italiano - due italiani* (one Italian man - two Italian men). Nouns ending in *a* are feminine singular. To make the plural the *a* is changed to *e*. *Una italiana - due italiane* (one Italian woman - two Italian women). Of course, there are a few exceptions as with any language.

The adjectives agree with the nouns so they too end in o, i, a or e. The verb is the most important part of a sentence. In speaking Italian usually the subject is omitted. From the verb endings it is easy to figure out the subject. Their endings are:

	Singular	Plural
1st person	o	mo
2nd person	i	te
3rd person	a	nno

The subjective pronouns are:

	Singular
1st person	io
2nd person	tu (familiar)
3rd person	egli (he) essa (she) Lei (polite form you singular)
	Plural
1st person	noi
2nd person	voi (familiar)
3rd person	essi (masc. they) essa (fem. they) Loro (polite form you plural)

The articles are:

il - singular masculine
lo - singular masculine for words beginning with st or z
la - singular feminine
i - plural masculine
gli - plural masculine for words beginning with st or z and words beginning with a vowel
le - plural feminine

For a more thorough explanation of grammar and vocabulary a text book should be consulted. The above is only meant to help in understanding a few simple phrases.

Italian is a rather complicated language with fifteen different tenses. But because of the musical quality and easy flow of this language, it is well worth learning.

Some Phrases and Vocabulary in Italian

arrivederci - good-bye or "till we see each other again"
come sta - how are you
come va - how goes it
bene - good, well
grazie - thank you
buon giorno - good day
mi chiamo . . . - my name is . . . .
buona sera - good evening
per favor - please
ecco - there it is!
non capisco - I don't understand
scusa - excuse me please

si - yes
no - no
fa caldo - it's hot out
fa freddo - it's cold out
non fa niente - it doesn't matter
la scuola - school
la sedia - the chair
la tavola - the table
il ristorante - the restaurant
la casa - the house
a casa - at home
andiamo a casa - let's go home
signora - Mrs. or madame
signor - Mr.
signore - sir
signorina - a young unmarried woman
una ragazza - a girl
uno ragazzo - a boy
la donna - the woman
il uomo - the man

Any study of the Italian language or dialects will reveal that they are rich in colloquialisms which are frequently maxims, succinct statements on how one should live. The following are a few examples taken from Richard Gambino's *Blood of My Blood.*

1. *Sangu du me sangu,* blood of my blood (Sicilian dialect). This phrase is the title of a book by Richard Gambino who claims that the phrase summarizes the centrality of kinship ties.

2. *Chi lascia la via vecchia per la nuova, sa quel che perde e non sa quel che trova.*

Whoever forsakes the old way for the new knows what he is losing but not what he will find.

3. *Un giorno senza vino è come un giorno senza sole.*

A day without wine is like a day without sun.

4. *La legge va contrai cristiani.*

The law works against people.

5. *In questa vita ci vuol coraggio.*

In this life one needs courage.

6. *Poveri si, ma perchè lagnusi?*

Poor yes, but why lazy?

7. *Chi martella per se martella bene.*

Who hammers for himself hammers well.

8. *In questa vita si fa uva.*

In this life one makes grapes (meaning one should be fruitful).

9. *Tratta con quelli che sono meglio di te e fagli le spese.*

Associate with those better than you and pay the expenses (meaning, this is a good way to put the powerful people in your debt).

10. *Impara a spesa d'altri.*

Learn at the expense of others (meaning study and learn from the behavior of others).

11. *L'ozio è il padre dei vizi.*

Idleness is the father of vices.

12. *Roma non fu fatta in un giorno.*

Rome wasn't built in a day.

13. *Scopa nuova scopa bene.*

A new broom sweeps clean.

14. *Non ti far vedere senza far niente.*

Don't be caught doing nothing.

15. *Una mazza, lavoro e pane fanno i figli belli.*

A cane, work and bread make beautiful children.

16. *A ogni uccello il suo nido è bello.*

There's no place like home. (To each bird his own nest is beautiful.)

17. *Giovane ozioso, vecchio bisognoso.*

Lazy youth, needy old age.

18. *L'arte non ha maggior nemico dell'ignoranza.*

Art has no greater enemy than ignornance.

19. A person is said to be *buono come il pane* or as good as bread.

20. *Chi va piano va sanno e va lontano.*

He who goes slowly goes safely and far, usually used in connection with driving.

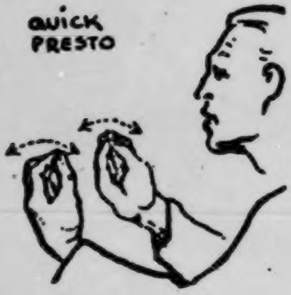
GESTURES

Italy's unique brand of sign language is sometimes thought to be more eloquent than words. Italians have raised this picturesque means of communication to the level of an art. Their gesticulations create some of the world's most animated conversations with gestures which are decisive and completely intelligible when one has learned what they mean. Once you are exposed to the pattern of Italian speech using various parts of the body, it doesn't take long to appreciate the fun as well as the utility of the conversational calisthenics that supplement the extensive vocabulary of the Italian language which has 119,053 words, according to Europe's first computerized dictionary.

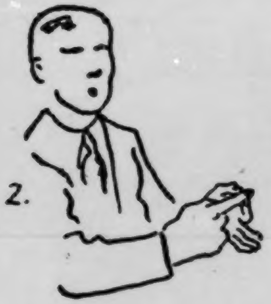
The following gestures, mostly taken from a newspaper feature story, may serve as a brief introduction to sign language for non-Italians.

1. Placing a stiff index finger against a temple and screwing the finger hard into the temple as if it were a screwdriver.
Meaning: You're crazy in the head.
2. Standing with the feet slightly apart, hands on the hips with the palms turned upward and outward away from the body.
Meaning: I'm defending something very close to me (such as family), watch out!
3. Placing the right finger under the right eye.
Meaning: He's very foxy, be careful.
4. Shaking a hand back and forth away from the chin with the fingers and thumb closed together.
Meaning: What do you want from me?
5. Stroking once under the chin in a forward direction with the backs of the fingers and then throwing out the hand.
Meaning: I don't give a damn.
6. Pressing thumb and forefinger together, forming a tiny circle while the other three fingers are spread outward and upward.
Meaning: I agree or I approve.
7. Placing a bent index finger slightly between the lips.
Meaning: Wait, let me think about it.
8. Bringing all the fingers and thumb to a point and placing them above an eyebrow.
Meaning: You are crazy, my friend.
9. Keeping the fingers spread and waving the arm upward to the side of the head.
Meaning: Oh, go away—and stop exaggerating.
10. Keeping the fingers of both hands close together and grasping the two hands to the side of the face.
Meaning: *Arrivederci* - see you soon.
11. Placing the hand with palm down and biting into the middle part of the forefinger.
Meaning: If I ever get my hands on you, boy will you be sorry.
12. Stroking an imaginary beard with a hand.
Meaning: I'm bored.
13. Placing an index finger to the side of a nostril.
Meaning: Something's fishy.
14. Extending a palm upward and outward in front of the face.
Meaning: Don't ever say anything about this.
15. Extending palm downward and outward in front of the face.
Meaning: Be careful.
16. Pulling the lid of the left eye with fingers of the left hand, making a circular motion around the right ear with the right fist, holding out three fingers.
Meaning: I'll call you at three.

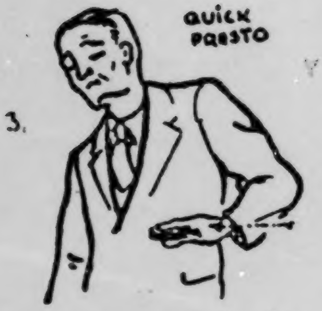
A Short Dictionary
of
Southern Italian Descriptive and Symbolic Gestures
Drawn by Professor Stuyvesant Van Veen[9]

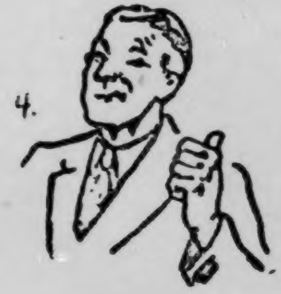


1. *What do you want?*



2. *Very little - so little*





3. *I am hungry - I have no money*
4. *Disdainful pointing to a person*

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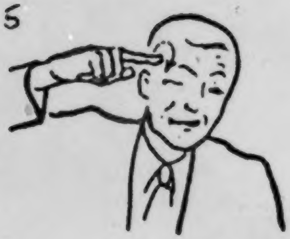
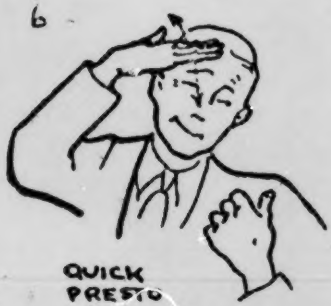
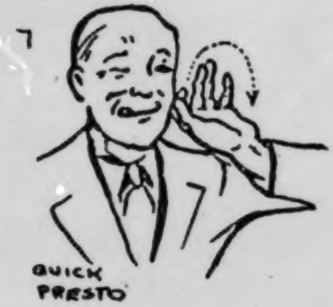
[9] Efron, David, *Gesture, Race and Culture*, Mouton & Co., The Hague, 1972.



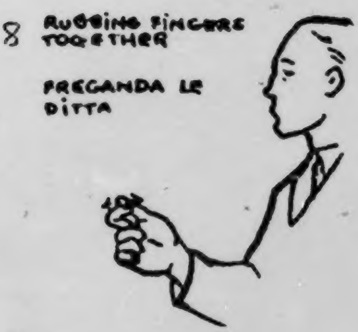
5. *Crazy*


6
QUICK
PRESTO

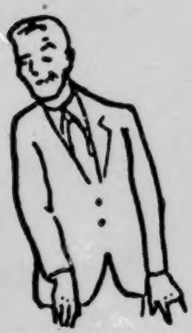
6. *Crazy*


7
QUICK
PRESTO

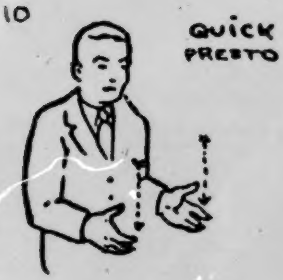
7. *Very good - Delicious*


8
RUBBING FINGERS TOGETHER
FREGANDA LE DITTA

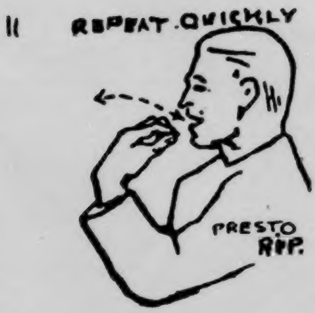
8. *Money*



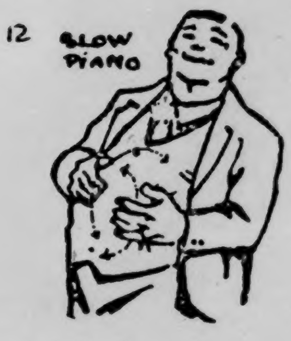
9. *He's bad luck - Evil eye*


10
QUICK
PRESTO

10. *So big*

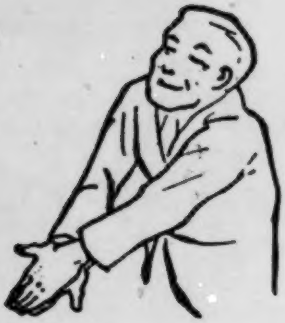

11
REPEAT QUICKLY
PRESTO
REP.

11. *To eat*


12
SLOW
PIANO

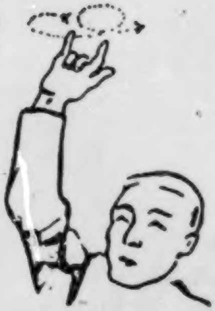
12. *Good food*

13



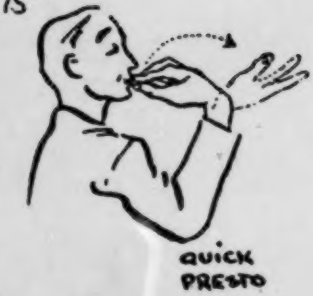
13. *Jackass*

14



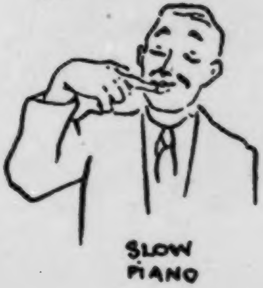
14. *Scaring evil spirits*

15


QUICK
PRESTO

15. *Good - Delicious - Beautiful*

16



16. *Good - Delicious - Beautiful*

MUSIC

Italy's achievements in the field of music are numerous. From the earliest sacred music of the fourth century to the 1974 Popular Song Festival of San Remo, Italy has led the western world in musical development. Pope Gregory of the sixth century established the Gregorian chant as part of the mass, and these chants have been the basis for much of the music that we know today. The clef signs were invented by Guido d'Arezzo in the twelfth century.

Italy is probably most well known for opera. The first opera was performed in 1607 in Mantua–*Orfeo* by Claudio Monteverdi. Italian composers continued to perfect the operatic style in the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The music of Rossini, Verdi, Donizetti and Vivaldi are known to all music lovers. In the twentieth century, Italy also produced some brilliant composers–Toscanini, Puccini and Menotti. La Scala in Milan is one of the world's most prestigious opera theaters.

Today popular music in Italy is one of the most important aspects of Italian culture. Each summer music festivals are conducted throughout the country and awards are given to the best songs of that year. One of the most important of these festivals is the Festival of San Remo. Another of the well known song festivals is held in September in Naples. This gay carnival lasts one week and is in honor of Madonna di Piedigrotto. One thousand songs are entered from which ten are chosen. The last night of the festival is spectacular. Fireworks are shot out over the Bay of Naples and the ten songs are sung by Italy's most popular artists. This festival has given the world such songs as *O Sole Mio*, *Funiculi, Funicula*, and *Santa Lucia*.

Another of the song festivals is called "In Giro" and is televised live from different cities throughout Italy.

Most of the popular songs deal with matters of love–*l'amore*–and have beautiful romantic melodies. Their music is a true expression of the Italian spirit.

CALENDAR OF ITALIAN HOLIDAYS AND FESTIVALS

January

January 1 - New Year's Day, national holiday

January 6 - celebration of the Epiphany or Twelfth Night

February

Almond blossom festival and songfest in Agrigento

Pre-Lent carnival and procession in Viareggio

Pre-Lent medieval joust in costume in Oristano

March

March 19 - St. Joseph's Day, national holiday

Holy week and Easter celebrations in Florence, Assisi, Taranto, Chieti, Trapani and Piana degli Albanesi

April

Ascension - 6th Thursday after Easter, national holiday

Corpus Christi - ninth Thursday after Easter, national holiday

International Handicraft Show in Florence

April 14-25 - International Trade Fair in Milan

April 25 - St. Mark's Day in Venice

April 25 - Liberation Day, national holiday

May

May 1 - Labor Day or May Day, national holiday

May Music Festival in Florence

May 7 - Sardinian Cavalcade in native costume

May 15 - Festival of the Candles in Gubbio, a religious procession

May 24 & 28 - Medieval football game in costume in Florence

Syracuse Greek Theater performances

June

First Sunday in June - Joust on the Bridge of Pisa

June 2 - Proclamation of the Republic, national holiday

June 16 - Feast Day of St. Mary Magdalena, patron saint of Strani

June 20 - "Battle of the Flowers" (L'Infiorata) in Genzano

June 24 - St. John the Baptist Day in Florence, Genoa and Turin

June 27-29 - St. Andrew's Feast Days, patron saint of Amalfi

June 19 - Saints Peter and Paul Day, national holiday

The Saracen Tournament in Arezzo - a medieval pageant.

Biennale Art Show in Venice (June to October)

Festival of Two Worlds - music, drama, and art in Spoleto.

July

July 2 - Palio delle Contrade in Siena - a medieval pageant with costumes and banners, followed by a horse race in the Campo Square.

Classical Music Festival in Ravenna

Open-air Opera in Verona, Rome and Naples

July 18 - Feast of the Redeemer, Regatta on Grand Canal in Venice

August

Tournament of the Crossbowmen (Palio dei Balestieri) in Gubbio

Tournament of the Quintain (Torneo della Quintana) in Ascoli Piceno

August 14 - Re-enactment of Saracen landings in Positano

August 15 - Assumption of the Virgin, national holiday

August 16 - Palio delle Contrade in Siena

International Film Festival in Venice from last week of August to first week of September

September

September 6 - Joust of the Saracen in Arezzo, Grand Canal Historical Regatta in Venice

September 19 - St. Gennaro Day in Naples

September 10 to 23 - International Levantine Trade Fair in Bari

First weekend - Tournament of the Crossbowmen in San Sepolcro (Palio dei Balestieri)

First weekend - Partita a Scacchi in Marostica, a live chess game in medieval costume

First part of September - the Grand Prix of Monza

September 28 - Festival of Birds, Piazza of Ponta Roma, Florence, colorful song birds sold midst music and feasting

October

October 3-4 - Feast of St. Francis of Assisi

October 4 - Feast of St. Petronio in Bologna

October 6-12 - Columbus celebrations in Genoa
October 15 - Antiques Show in Florence
Umbrian Festival of Music in Perugia

November

November 1 - All Saints Day, national holiday
November 4 - Victory Day 1918, national holiday
First week - International Auto Show in Turin

December

December 7 - St. Ambrose Day in Milan
December 8 - Day of the Immaculate Conception, national holiday
Christmas Festivals throughout Italy - one of the most important is the Christmas Festival in Rome in Piazza Navona
Opera season starts
December 26 - St. Stephen's Day, national holiday

CELEBRATIONS

The following are descriptions of ways that some of these holidays and festivals are celebrated.

Christmas

Christmas in Italy centers on the religious celebration and lasts from the Novena, nine days before Christmas, to the Epiphany or Twelfth Night.

In the south shepherds come down from the hills dressed in goatskins and play their pipes or flutes in front of street shrines to honor the Virgin Mary.

Almost every home has a *presepio* or nativity scene. Many are elaborately carved family heirlooms handed down from generation to generation. Saint Francis of Assisi originated the custom of a manger scene in the Italian village of Greccio in 1223. Using live animals, Saint Francis was successful in showing the villagers what Bethlehem was like on the first Christmas. Artists began to copy the scene and the custom spread to private homes. Now nativity scenes appear in Italian homes, shops, schools, offices and sometimes even in doorways. Every night for nine days before Christmas the family lights candles and prays before the *presepio.*

Italians combined the Christmas tree of northern Europe and the name and shape of the traditional Yule log flame to form the *ceppo.* Made of wood it could be kept from year to year thus saving precious and scarce timber. The pyramidal structure is decorated with candles, colored paper and pine cones. The first level is for the *presepio*. The second level displays small presents and candies often in a small wooden cart. The upper levels contain the Madonna, angels, and fruit and cookies for guests.

Although no special foods are common to all of Italy on Christmas, most families have a supper lasting several hours on Christmas Eve. Some of the dishes which might be served are *capitoni* or fried eels; *pastiria di grano* or wheat pie, and a candy called *torrone.*

Christmas Eve is a time for going to Mass. Bells call most of the Italian people to religious ceremonies on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Epiphany or Twelfth Night
(Feast of the Three Kings)

Celebrated on January 6, this is the day for giving gifts in Italy. On Epiphany Eve, La Befana, our equivalent of Santa Claus, goes around and visits children, leaving presents for the good and coal for the naughty. According to legend, La Befana goes forth every year in search of the Christ child. La Befana lived in a cottage on a road where the three wise men passed by. They told her they were looking for a "bambino" who was born to be King. They asked her to help them look for him but she refused because she had just lost her husband and baby to the plague and did not want to leave. The next day a local shepherd explained to La Befana who the wise men were so she decided to go see the "Bambino" and bring him gifts. But La Befana couldn't find the wise men or the Baby Jesus. For two thousand years she has been trying to find them.

The children put out their shoes or jackets for La Befana to place gifts in them.

Families may choose their gifts for each other from the urn of fate. This is a large bowl or jar from which each member of the family draws a present until all the presents are gone. Some are empty boxes which adds to the fun and makes the gift-giving longer.

Carnevale

This begins January 17th and continues until Ash Wednesday. In Cambria the Parade of Months is held. There is a procession of allegorical figures that represent the twelve months. The figures pay homage to the king who is attended by four harlequins. Later the harlequins are crowned as the procession moves from place to place. This is then followed by a feast.

L'Infiorata

This procession takes place in June in Genzano. Flowers are put onto the streets in a beautiful design. The procession then passes over the flowers and crushes them. The flowers are picked the day before and kept in water until morning. The petals are then plucked and separated according to color. The design is then chalked onto the street and flowers are used to fill in the designs. The houses lining the streets are decorated and the sacrament is carried over the bed of flowers in the procession.

Easter

Easter, Santa Pasqua, is of course celebrated all over the country but one of the more noteworthy celebrations is in Florence. A dove (*la colomba*) is released on a wire from the top of the cathedral in Signoria Square. The flight of the dove indicates good fortune for the city for the coming year.

Festival of Santa Lucia in Syracuse

Two feasts are held in honor of Santa Lucia, one December 13 on her birthday and the other a little later. On December 5 her silver image and bier are taken from the cathedral to her church in the Bargo of Santa Lucia. They remain exposed until the eve of the 13th when they are returned in a procession to the cathedral. The streets and houses are decorated with colorful cloths.

Strong men compete for the honor of carrying the bier. Members of the carpenters' group wear black frocks and ring a little silver bell during the pauses in the procession. This also is an honor.

The second feast of Santa Lucia commemorates a miracle. It is said that Syracuse was suffering from famine and the people prayed to Santa Lucia. A ship filled with corn sailed into the port. Its arrival was announced by a dove that flew into the cathedral where the people were praying. For this celebration Santa Lucia's bier is again taken from the cathedral and returned in a procession under a shower of flowers with a dove flying overhead.

St. Peter's Day

St. Peter is the patron saint of fishermen. The fishermen of Italy honor their protector on June 29. They go to church in the morning and that evening there is a great feast with fireworks. People sit around a bonfire and eat fish.

Festivale del Grillo (Festival of the Cricket)

This event takes place on Ascension Day in Florence. The crowds go to the Cascina Public Gardens on the Arno to buy crickets in little painted cages. There are balloons and toys and food. The Florentines say that if the cricket sings it means good luck.

Name Day

In Italy a child is given the name of a saint at baptism in addition to their given name. The children celebrate their saint's name day. In many areas this is more important than their actual birthday. The saint remains the patron and guardian of the person throughout life.

SPORTS, RECREATION AND LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES

Football or *calcio*,[*] which in America we call soccer, was played in Florence in the 16th century but was abandoned until around 1900 when the English reintroduced it to Italy. They formed the Genoa Cricket and Football Club. In the early days the native Italians were banned from playing on the English team but soon showed themselves very capable football players. Football clubs were eventually started all over Italy and the sport soon became the national pastime. In 1912 the Italian team from Turin played in an international tournament with Austria.

Today *calcio* is the most popular sport in Italy, as in most of the other European countries and in South America. In the United States soccer has become more popular in recent years and soccer teams have been formed at most of our Eastern universities. The vast immigration of Italians to Argentina introduced the game there and football soon became the national sport in South American countries.

A round ball, about the size of a basketball, is kicked towards the goal on a field that is much like an American football field, except that there is a goal cage like in hockey rather than goal posts. No one is allowed to touch the ball with the hands except for the goalie who tries to block the ball from entering the goal cage any way that he can.

SOCCER GAME

In Italy every Sunday during calcio season the stadiums are filled with enthusastic fans. The Italian Soccer Team, composed of the best players from local teams, is one of Europe's finest. They are called *Gli Azzurri* because of the blue shirts they wear. The first World Cup Tournament was held in 1928 in Uruguay. Because of the distance and expense, Italy did not compete, in spite of the fact that they had been one of the five countries that had organized the World Cup. They did, however, compete in the subsequent games and have won several World Cups.

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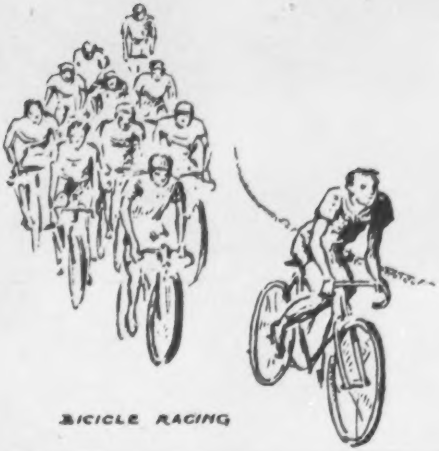
[*] Although *calcio* is the Italian word for football, most Italians use the English word "football."



BICICLE RACING

Probably the second most popular sport is cycling, which the Italians excel in. Every spring there is a tour (*Giro d'Italia*) in which other countries participate. This is an uphill-downhill bicycle race that crosses the entire length of Italy for a three-week period. The spectators line the roads to cheer on their favorite cyclists.

Another of the sports for which Italy has been well known is auto racing. Italians have been building beautiful sports cars for many years. Regular street driving is a sport to many Italians. They zoom through the tiny streets in their Fiats, Alfa-Romeos or Lancias. One of the auto races that is on the world circuit is the Monza Grand Prix. This is held sometime early in September of each year. The Mille Miglia was one of Italy's most popular races, but it was discontinued several years ago because it was too dangerous for spectators. The Mille Miglia racers sped thorugh town after town for one thousand miles.

One sport that is steadily rising in popularity is baseball American style, Baseball was introduced to Italy twenty-eight years ago and there are now eight teams in the Italian baseball federation—two in Bologna and one each in Rome, Florence, Milan, Parma, Rimini and Nettuno. Nettuno is a small town south of Rome where baseball is now number one. Soccer was outlawed there because the fans rioted so often. Now all their energies are spent in cheering at the baseball games. When a player makes an error, the fans subtly yell at the top of their lungs "*errore.*" The fans in Nettuno even yell when nothing is happening.

Other pastimes and recreational activities include skiing and horseback riding. There are many fine ski resorts in the Alps in northern Italy. Cortina d'Ampezzo is the most familiar. There is also fine skiing in the Matterhorn-Monte Rosa area on the Swiss border. Horseback riding has always been popular, mostly with the upper class. The modern school of horsemanship in Italy is called the Caprilli method. Every May the International Horse Show is held in Rome at the Piazza di Siena. There is also an International Polo Tournament in Rome each year. Horse races are held in Milan, Turin, Rome, Bologna, Florence, Naples and Merano.

Because Italy is almost totally surrounded by water, activities like swimming, diving and fishing are understandably quite popular and equally available to all classes.

Other extremely important leisure time activities involve music. Many families entertain themselves after supper by singing and playing a stringed instrument or accordian. Dancing is also very popular with people of all ages. On summer evenings the piazzas are filled with small orchestras at outdoor cafes where couples dance for hours. Dancing is an essential ingredient to any social gathering in Italy.

Another favorite pastime is the *giro*, or walk around town on Sunday or in the evening before the evening meal.

Games

There are numerous games played by Italian children and adults. The following are descriptions of only a few of them.

La Contradizione[11]

This is an Italian game of stump the followers. A leader, standing before the group makes gestures and motions suddenly or unexpectedly. The followers must do the exact opposite. If the leader laughs, the followers must cry. If he sits, they must stand. Those who are too slow or do the wrong things are out. This keeps up until there is only one left and he becomes the new leader.

Scarcia Barili (in English this means unloading barrels)

This is a vigorous game played in pairs, standing back to back with elbows hooking. One bends over, sending the other up on his back. Then he comes down and he bends over and sends the other up over his back. They try to reach a goal twelve feet away, bending and lifting. The first pair to reach the goal wins.

Il Porcellino (in English this means little pig)

Children sit in a circle with one child in the middle. Each of the children is a part of the pig: the head or *la testa,* the tail or *il codino,* the snout or *il grugno,* the eyes or *gli occhi,* etc. When the player in the middle yells "get up, head," "sit down, eyes," the head and the eyes must quickly change seats before the child in the middle can get to one of the empty seats. If she makes it, she then takes the name of the one left without a seat who then goes to the middle of the circle.

Giuocco del Ponte (in English this means bridge game)

Every year on the bridges of Ponte di Mezzo in Pisa and Ponte dei Pugni in Venice, this jousting game is re-enacted, followed by a huge feast. Two groups, the city-ites and the suburbanites, are formed and go to opposite ends of the bridge. They then rush onto the bridge and try to hold it for their side. The players wear helmets and use shields. There is a rule of no hitting below the belt. This festival is a favorite with old and young alike.

This joust has been modified by the children who play it in the street using the curbs as borders. "Holding the bridge" is accomplished like this. A Bridgemaster is chosen. The two sides are at opposite ends of the bridge. The Bridgemaster cries out "Go city" or "Go suburb". If the city-ites are called, they march up to the middle of the bridge and must wait until the master calls "Turn them back". When the city-ites get to the middle, the suburbanites rush them and try to catch as many as possible before they can return to their end of the bridge. The ends of the "bridge" are marked by lines in the street. The Bridgemaster then can (1) command the suburbanites to return to their end of the bridge with their captives who have now become suburbanites themselves or (2) command the city-ites to rush the bridge and try to retake the captured. The objective is to capture all the members of one group and hold the bridge. In order to capture, one must tag an opponent and cry out "I turn you back." The tagger holds onto the captive's arm and waits for the next command.

Sicilian handclapping rhyme

Manu, manuzzi
Pani e ficuzzi
Vieni lu tata
Porta' i cussuzzi
Nuatri nn'i manciamu
Ea bambino . . . . 'un cci nni damu.

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[11] Iris Vinton, *The Folkways Omnibus of Children's Games,* the Stackpole Co., 1970.

Hand little hand
Bread and figs
Here comes your papa
Bringing candy
We eat it all up
And to you baby . . . give none.

Bimbo (Lucky Leaf)[12]

A player is chosen to be captain or "bimbo" and is given two green leaves. The others form two lines about fifteen feet apart, placing their hands behind their backs with palms open. The bimbo walks behind the lines and silently drops one of his leaves into the open palms of one player in each line. He then yells, "Stop, thief, lucky leaf". The players holding the leaves must rush to the opposite line and deposit their leaf in the hands of another player before being tagged by the bimbo. The leaves are then passed back and forth between players of opposite lines. No one wants to get caught with a leaf. If a player is tagged with a leaf he or she then becomes the new bimbo and the game starts over again. This game, which is similar to our "hot potato", is very popular with children in Italy and is played at parties and festivals.

Chicken Market

One child is the buyer and one is the seller. The other children are the chickens and are sitting in a row with their hands clasped under their knees. The buyer asks the seller if he has chickens for sale. The seller says, "Yes, I have fine chickens, would you like to see them?" The buyer looks over the chickens and places her hand on the head of the first chicken. She says, "This one is too skinny" and goes to the second one. She says, "This one is too old" and continues until she finds the one she wants. Then the seller and buyer take hold of the little chicken's arms and swing the chicken as they count to three. The chicken tries to keep from smiling and to keep his hands clasped. If he is successful, he's sold. If not, he has to stay. The game continues until all the chickens are sold.

Hand Tag

Hand tag is of course played by children everywhere. In an Italian variation the player who is "It" can't tag a player who is hanging onto a tree or anything else that enables him to keep his feet off the ground.

Wolf and Lamb

The "wolf" stands outside a circle formed by other players. The "lamb" stands in the center and yells "I am the lamb." The "wolf" answers "I am the wolf and I'll catch you." The lamb says, "No, you won't." The wolf then tries to enter the circle. The players try to keep the "wolf" out by blocking him with their arms. If the "wolf" succeeds, then the players lift their arms up and try to help the "lamb" to escape. If the "lamb" is caught then he or she joins the circle and the "wolf" becomes the "lamb."

Filberta

Several castles are made by placing three filberts, one on top of the other, which are placed a few inches apart, in a row. The players stand about three feet from the row and try to knock over the castles by throwing a filbert at them. The one who knocks over the most castles wins the game. The children then eat the filberts.

Painting Sand Pictures

Each player has four bags of colored sand and one bag of white. The white sand is made into a square form on the ground. The player then sifts the colored sand through his or her fingers, making a picture. A prize is given to the player who paints the best picture in a given time.

[12] Sara Hunt and Ethel Cain, *Games the World Around*, A.G. Barnes and Co., 1941.

Boss or Padrone

A group of men, perhaps as many as twenty or thirty, sometimes gather and each contributes a small amount to buy refreshments. The men first decide the one with whom the counting will begin. Then all of them put out however many fingers they want to. All of the fingers are counted. Then beginning with the man selected at the start of the game, they count off the total number of fingers, each man counting one. The man who comes out to be the same number as the total of the fingers is called *padrone* or boss. They repeat the same procedure to select a vice boss. These two leaders then conduct a series of conversations about distributing the refreshments.

Padrone: "I'd like to give some cookies to this man."

Vice Padrone: "Do you give this free, with all your heart and with no hitches? You like him?"

Padrone: "No, I think I'll eat it myself."

Vice Padrone: "How about this fellow?"

Padrone: "Yes, I think I will give him some nice soda."

Vice Padrone: "Do you give this free?"

Padrone: "Yes, I like him—he is a good man."

The game continues until all the refreshments are distributed. The two bosses sometimes eat all of the food, but then the next time no one would give any to them. Sometimes a man might even get quite angry if he is given nothing.

Morra (Morla, Mora)

This is a finger matching game played by two or sometimes three men. Each throws out as many fingers as he wants while at the same time shouting out a guess as to how many total fingers will be shown. Morra means that no fingers at all will be thrown. The first person to get to twenty-one wins. Men sometimes bet money on this game although it is often played just for fun to pass the time or while taking a break from work.

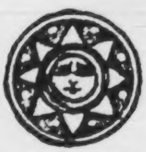
Scopa (Sweep)

There are a number of card games played by Italian men using a special Neapolitan deck of cards. There are forty cards in this deck with four suits: *coppe* (cups); *denari* (coins); *spade* (swords); and *bastone* (clubs). Each suit has three face cards: king, jack and queen.

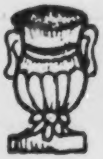
The game of *scopa* can be played by two or three people playing individually, or by four players playing as partners.

At the beginning of the game each player is dealt three cards and four cards are placed face up on the table. Each player, in turn tries to pick up one or more of the face-up cards. This is done by matching a card from one's hand with a card or cards on the table. Thus a 7 of *coppe* could pick up a 7 of *bastone*. A 7 of *coppe* could also pick up a 3 and 4, or 5 and 2, or 6 and ace, or a 3 and 3 and ace, etc. of any suit. The queen represents 8, and jack 9, and the king 10.

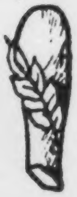
DENARI



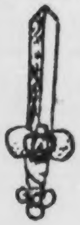
COPPE



BASTONE



SPADE



If a player cannot make a match, he simply discards a card, turning it face up with the others on the table. When all players have used up the cards in their hands, three more cards are dealt to each of them and the game continues in this fashion until no more plays can be made.

Scoring: 1 point for each *scopa*. A *scopa* is accomplished when a player picks up all of the cards on the table in one turn.
1 point for the most cards.
1 point for the most *coppe*.
1 point for the 7 of *denari*.
1 point for *primiera*—having the most value in each of the four suits (a total of four points). For this scoring the cards are valued as follows: 7 = 21 points, 6 = 18 points, ace = 16 points, all other regular cards = true face value plus 10 points, face cards = 10 points.

With two players, one wins by earning a score of 9. With more people the winning score is usually set at 11.

There is another game called *scopone* which is played the same way as *scopa* except that 10 cards are dealt to each player (usually four playing as partners) and at the beginning of the game each player places one card face up on the table.

Briscola (trump)

Another popular card game is *briscola*. This game is played by either two people or four, playing as partners. The values of the cards are as follows:

Ace = 11 points
3 = 10 points
King = 4 points
Jack = 3 points
Queen = 2 points
The other cards have no value

Each player is dealt three cards and one card is turned up which determines the trump suit. The player to the left of the dealer begins by leading any card. The other players can play any card from their hands. Whoever puts out the highest card in the suit which was led, wins all of the cards unless someone plays a trump.

The player who "kills" the other cards is the first one to take a new card from the top of the deck and then the other players take a new card. He is also the one to lead a card in the next round.

Scoring: When no more plays are possible the game ends. The values of the cards are added up. The first player or team to reach 120 points is the winner.

Cheating: There are certain well recognized ways of cheating in *briscola* to indicate what trump a player holds in his hand.

a. Winking one eye - the ace of trump
b. Screwing up the mouth - the 3 of trump
c. Rolling the eyes up - the king of trump
d. Sticking out the tongue a little - the queen of trump

Bocce (Italian Lawn Bowling, also spelled Bocci, or Boccie)

Bocce is a bowling game originating in Italy and one of the oldest of all sports. It is played with eight large *bocce* balls and a small target ball called the *pallino*. The object of the game is to roll the *bocce* ball closest to the *pallino*. There are four balls to one side, or team, and they are made in two colors to distinguish the balls of one team from the four balls of the opposing team. (These large balls are also inscribed with distinctive lines to identify the balls of the players on the same team.) Since the popular game is generally played by four players, two against two, this is the game we will describe.

Open Bocce: Open *bocce* may be played anywhere on almost any kind of surface, in the back or front yard, on a smooth lawn, a dirt road, or rough terrain. Playing techniques are different for each type of terrain. The *pallino* is thrown out by a member of team A. He can throw it any distance in any direction. The same player then rolls or throws his two balls as close to the target as possible. Then a player on the opposing team tries to place his balls nearer the target. Then the second player from team A plays and finally the second member of team B.

There is a variation to open *bocce*. The first player rolls his first *bocce* ball only. He then steps aside and does not play again until the opposing side has gotten one of its *bocce* balls closest to the *pallino*. The side whose *bocce* is the closest is called "inside" and the opposing team "outside." Whenever a team gets "inside," it steps aside and lets the "outside" team bowl. This continues until one side has used all its *bocce* balls. Players must follow their proper turn throughout the game. A player must use all his balls at each turn, except in a game of two people, then each player uses two balls at each turn.

Closed Court Bocce: There are certain added rules and methods of play defined by the lines of the court.

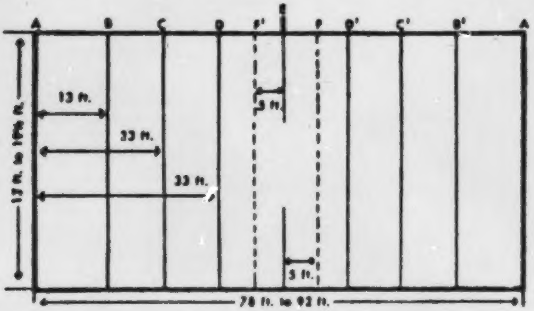
Playing the *pallino*: The player must stand between lines A and B and throw the *pallino* before line B. He may not step further than line C. The *pallino* must fall at least beyond line F but no further than line B of the other end of the court. It must not go out of bounds or stop closer than one foot to the borders. If it does, it is considered a foul and the opposing team gets to throw the *pallino*. If the opposing team fouls, then the *pallino* is placed at the center of line F beyond the center of the field.

There are three shots permitted in regulation play:

(1) Standard shot: the player must stand between lines A and B and throw the *bocce* ball towards the *pallino*. He must release the ball before line B and may not step past line C after throwing the ball. The ball must stop at least on or beyond line F of the far half of the court, must not go out of bounds or touch any other ball on the court or the *pallino*. The object is just to get as close as possible without touching the *pallino*. If a player fouls, his ball is removed from the field and the balls he has moved are returned to their original positions.

(2) Call shot: the player must stand between lines A and C, and release his ball before line C and cannot step past line D after releasing the ball. The ball must stop on or beyond line F of the far half of the field. The player must specify his target before throwing and his ball must hit either that target or another ball of the *pallino* if they lie one foot from the target. If there are no other balls one foot from the target, then he must hit the target itself. The ball must hit the target (or another within one foot) before hitting any other balls on the court. All balls moved by a foul shot are returned to their original positions and the game is resumed. If the shot is good, then the balls stay where they have been pushed. All balls pushed out of bounds are disqualified. Also, any ball knocked back before line F of the far half of the court is disqualified.

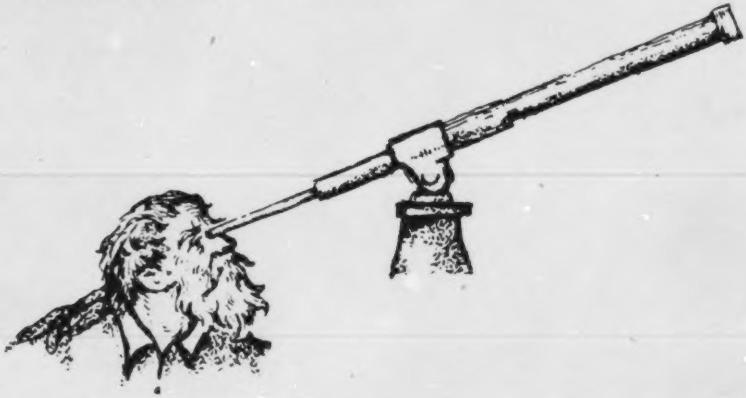
OFFICIAL BOCCE COURT LAYOUT



If the *pallino* is knocked out of bounds or before line F, the whole frame is invalid and the players must start again.

(3) Aerial call shot: this shot is similar to the call shot except that the ball is hurled through the air and must land either directly on or within one foot of the target named and immediately proceed to hit the target or an object within one foot thereof. The ball must hit the target before hitting or moving any other ball on the court.

Scoring: when all the balls have been thrown, the referee (or a delegation of the two teams) proceeds to measure the distance of the balls from the *pallino*. All measurements are made from the outer dimensions of the balls and not the distance between the balls. Each ball that is closer to the target ball or *pallino* than the nearest ball of the opposite team, scores one point. In case of a tie between two balls of opposing teams, then neither get the point, or the two players in question can play it again. This must be decided before the game starts. In case of a tie between two balls of the same team, then both balls get a point. The game is won when a predetermined total is reached by one of the teams.



GALILEO GALILEI

PRACTICAL CONTRIBUTIONS AND INVENTIONS

Throughout history the Italians have made endless contributions in the fields of medicine, science, mathematics, surgery, architecture, art, music and law. The following are some of the most notable.

We have found from the tombs of the Etruscans and excavations in Pompeii, that Italians practised a very advanced form of dentistry from early times. Examples of very sophisticated bridge work and gold inlays have been discovered.

Salvino de Armati of Florence was the inventor of the eye glasses as we know them. He was the first to put rims on lenses that a person could actually wear.

The greatest of all inventors was Leonardo da Vinci. Leonardo was in fact probably the greatest Italian who ever lived in terms of universal genius. He was convinced that man could fly and spent most of his life trying to invent wings that would carry man through the sky. Leonardo was the inventor of the wheelbarrow, the lock system of canals, the derrick, the sawing machine for marble that is still used today in Carrara quarries, a vast collection of war machines, the contact lenses first worn by ladies in court to change the color of their eyes for cosmetic purposes, and many more inventions. Leonardo was one of the great engineers of his time. Working models of his war machines are housed in a tiny museum in Vinci in the hills surrounding Florence. To Leonardo goes credit for the invention of the camera obscura, the forerunner of the modern camera, as well as the bicycle.

Michelangelo is another great engineer of that period. One of the most outstanding architectural designs of all time, the dome of St. Peter's in Rome, was made by Michelangelo. He also invented war machines similar to those of Leonardo, as well as new painting techniques and colors. Almost all inventions having to do with art are Italian. Fresco painting, color mixture, color retention and color contrasts were all developed to their highest degree in Italy in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The Venetians learned the secret for coloring glass that is unequalled by anyone in history. The art of applying gold leaf to paper so that it remains bright is also an Italian achievement.

Galileo was the first to use the telescope for astronomy and the pendulum as a measure of time.

The compass was invented by an Italian from Amalfi in the twelfth or thirteenth century.

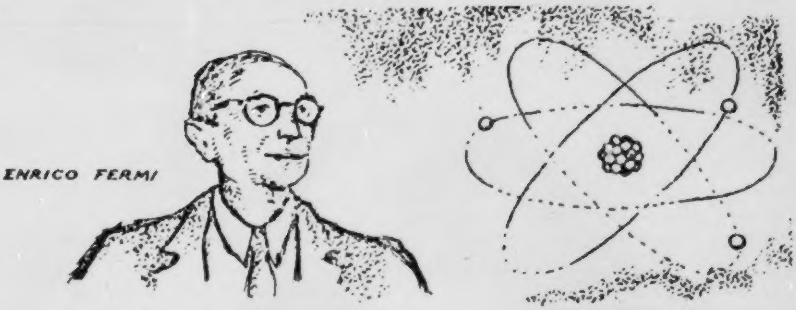
The thermometer and barometer are Italian inventions. It was an Italian named Amici who discovered the systems of lens immersion and microscopic achromatization that led to the development of the compound microscope used in science. Malpighi used the microscope on plants and human tissue and discovered capillaries and other physiological facts.

At the end of the nineteenth century, an Italian named Marconi first conceived the idea of the wireless telegraph.

Italian contributions in the field of music are numerous. The scale, the opera, harmony, the chant, the violin and the hammar action of the piano are just a few.

Enrico Fermi received the Nobel prize in 1938 for his contribution to theoretical physics and in 1942 he produced the first sustained nuclear chain reaction.

These are just a few of the many Italians who have made significant contributions to the rest of the world.



CUISINE

The art of Italian cooking has developed throughout the centuries. It was not until the Renaissance that dining rituals and the preparation of food became important as an art. However, the Italian love of fine eating dates back to Roman times. It is believed that a Roman cookbook, *De Re Coquinarius*, is the first ever written.

As early as 1290, a cookbook by an unknown author describes ways to cook *vermicelli* and *tortelli*. In the 1400's several books on table courtesies and cooking were printed. The most influential of them was Bartolomeo Scappi's *Cooking Secrets of Pope Pius V* published in 1570. It included menus of Neapolitan spice cakes, *marzipan*, *proscuito* cooked in wine and song birds roasted on a spit. All of these foods are still enjoyed in Italy today.

Pasta is a basic dish eaten all over Italy. Marco Polo is often credited with bringing spaghetti from the Orient in 1292. However, there are many evidences of pasta being eaten in Italy from ancient times. A tool identified as a macaroni maker has been found in Etruscan frescoes. There is also evidence that *ravioli* and *fettuccini* made from semolina paste were prepared in the Middle Ages. According to geographer Al-Idrisi, Sicilians were eating strands of dough at the time of the Arab conquest in 800 A.D. By the seventeenth century, pasta was being prepared on an assembly line basis. Teams of barefoot men walked through the dough to kneed it. It was then shoved into a cylinder that shaped the dough into various forms and the strips were laid out to dry.

In northern Italy, *polenta* and *risotto* are very popular. Saffron is used a great deal to color food. In the Renaissance period, gold was used to decorate platters of food. Later saffron was substituted to give food a gold color.

In Florence in the fifteenth century, under the rule of Lorenzo di Medici, the art of dining reached new dimensions. An instrument called the fork was used for the first time. The practise of washing hands before eating was introduced. Appropriate dining music was selected. When Lorenzo's daughter, Catherine di Medici, married Henry II of France, she took with her to France her chefs and the refined Italian eating habits which amazed the French court. The French were still using their hands to eat. Catherine loved food and became obese as she grew older. She is considered the mother of French cooking.

Ice cream, *gelati*, also an Italian invention, reached Paris through a Sicilian named Francisco Procopio who opened an ice cream shop on the left bank. From Paris the idea spread throughout the world.

Because most of the Italian immigrants have come from southern Italy, what we call Italian cuisine in the United States is actually the regional cooking of the southern part of Italy: Calabria, Campania, Sicily, Puglia, Abruzzi and Basilicata. Pizza is one example of this. It is believed to have originated in Naples as a means for using up leftovers. Pizza has, of course, spread to other parts of Italy and Europe.

Rice and potatoes, so common in northern Italy, are rarely eaten in sourthern Italy. *Ricotta* cheese and *oregano* are widely used in Neapolitan cooking. From Sicily have come the delicious sweets, pastries like *cannoli* (pastry shells stuffed with *ricotta* or cream) and the beautifully decorated *marzipan* (almond paste) candies introduced into Italy by the Arabs. Rum cakes are popular in Sicily and Naples.

There are noticeable differences between northern and southern Italy in the preparation of food. Butter is the preferred cooking fat in the north, while olive oil is used in the south. The use of spices is quite different. The food north of Rome tends to be almost bland compared with the spicy food of sourthern Italy. A lot of *oregano* is used in the thick tomato sauce that is so popular in the sourthern provinces. It is quite interesting that the tomato, so essentail to the Italian cuisine was totally unknown in Europe before the discovery of the New World. The tomato, like potatoes and corn, was brought from America by the early explorers.

A typical Italian menu might look like this:

Antipasto (a cold platter that includes vegetables, or pickled eggplant, peppers, cauliflower, with tomato, anchovies, and meats like salami or prosciuto)

Pasta or pastina in brodo - any type of macaroni or small pieces of pasta in broth

Meat and vegetables (usually veal or pork)

Cheese and fruit

Dessert (usually only on special occasions)

Espresso (sometimes served with a liqueur like Anisette)

RELIGION AND BELIEFS

The religion of Italians living in the Mezzogiorno and in Sicily can best be described as "folk-Catholicism." This is a term coined by anthropologists to refer to a belief system which encompasses both the formal religion of the Roman Catholic Church and less formalized non-Catholic beliefs and practices. In southern Italy this folk religion is a mixture which has developed from localized customs coming into contact with the ideas of ancient Greece and Rome as well as the Islamic faith.

Above all else, one must recognize that the *contadini* have a pragmatic approach to religion. Living amidst a very harsh environment, both in a geographic and social sense, they have been subject to serious misfortunes which are the result of known or unknown forces beyond their control. They have attempted to deal with these forces and over centuries have refined their brand of folk-Catholicism according to the criteria of "whatever works."

Although *contadini* regard themselves as religious, a number of authors also describe them as anticlerical or even antichurch. This seeming paradox is quickly dispelled when one realizes that the *contadini* tend to separate religion from the religious institution. The reason for this separation is that historically the Roman Catholic Church has been closely allied with the rich landowning class and until 1873 was itself the largest single landowner. At that time the newly unified Italian nation confiscated the Church's properties but this did not change the *contadini's* relationship with the Church since they still had to deal with the Church as a very worldly social institution which was regarded as exploitative.

And so the *contadini* relates to the Catholic Church in a quite pragmatic fashion. Attending daily Mass or other routine rituals is considered to be the woman's role. The men participate in some basics such as baptisms, marriages, patron saint celebrations and funerals. Aside from these necessary formalities, there is a certain suspicion. This skepticism, rather than passive or unquestioning faith, is well illustrated by a number of stories in which the people have rejected a saint who did not help when called upon for assistance. In one instance, during the volcanic eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 1906, numerous statues of saints and Madonnas were thrown into ditches and replaced with others, and the residents of Naples set their statue of San Gennaro in the path of the lava flow, reputedly shouting, "Save our city or perish!"

The *contadini's* pragmatized Catholicism is blended in with their folk beliefs. The most widespread of these is their belief in *il mal occhio,* the evil eye. Although the exact meaning of the term is not clear, it appears that it derived from the Greek belief that certain pools of water were the eyes of monsters. In the southern Italian context the singular, *il mal occhio*, refers to a number of evil forces which can be summoned by one person against another. There are certain individuals who can perform the necessary rituals for removal of the evil eye and there are amulets, such as a horn or horns, worn as protective devices to help ward off the evil eye. This belief and its associated customs serve to pinpoint the source of otherwise amorphous problems, offer a solution and future protection as well as regularize ways of dealing with the passions of jealousy which are said to be quite strong in southern Italian interpersonal relationships.

The evil eye phenomenon may not be as foreign to church practices as seems at first, for the Catholic Church recognizes the existence of the Devil and his demons and it is not inconceivable that historically the church developed special rituals to deal with these evil forces, rituals which were instigated or have been taken over by the *contadini*. While the exact connection is a bit of a mystery, the ritual as practiced in the 1970's contains liberal doses of Catholic symbolization. For further information on the evil eye, please see the section on Folk Beliefs in Part III—Italian-Americans in Connecticut.

THE FAMILY

In order to comprehend the way of life of Italian-Americans in Connecticut today, it is crucial that one understands the familial system in southern Italy, for this is where the vast majority of Italians emigrated from and where for centuries the family has been the central and perhaps the only really enduring social unit providing continuity among the lives of individuals. One suspects that family life in both rural and urban industrialized areas of northern Italy may be quite similar to that studied in the South but there is little data available on this.

How can we best characterize the familial system of southern Italy? First and foremost, it is a bilateral extended family: bilateral meaning that descent is reckoned from both the mother's and the father's lineages; and extended meaning that there is a strong potential for developing important social and emotional ties with relatives outside of the immediate nuclear family (mother, father and children). Thus in an extended family system, one often has close relationships with grandparents, grandchildren, aunts, uncles and first, second, and sometimes third cousins.

The southern familial system is supplemented by the institution of *comparaggio* which is referred to as fictive kinship by anthropologists. Close friends of one's own age, highly respected older people or even blood relatives are invited to be godparents to a child at baptism or confirmation. Becoming a godparent either strengthens existing family ties if the person is already a relative or formalizes the setting up of a quasi-familialistic relationship if the person is outside of the family.

Male godparents who are one's peers are called *compari* or *pari;* if they are older men to whom respect is due, they are called *padrini* or *zio* (uncle). Female godparents who are one's peers are called *commare* or *mare;* if they are older ladies, they are called *madrine* or *zia* (aunt). Sometimes these terms are also used to refer to, or to address close friends who have the respect and the affection of the family, even though they are not officially godparents, to signify that they are considered to be almost as close as real family.

The purpose of this fictive kinship system is, of course, to extend the extended family and to set up a wider network of reliable family ties with nonkin.

The primary function of the bilateral extended family is physical and social security. It acts as a self-help organization within which its members can satisfy their several social needs. This is not to say that the family has been totally isolated from other families or the village or the province or the nation of Italy. However, the family has been and still is the most secure of these social units since members are bound together for life by blood ties.

The family in southern Italy developed into a tightly knit communal group in response to the needs of the people. There have been few outside institutions to help with economic, educational, legal, medical and general social or emotional problems.

Thus, the family grew into an economic unit, with its members pooling resources and sharing with one another. To this day Italian informants tell how unmarried working children turn over all of their earnings to their mother who then doles out a small allowance. This economic cooperation is also manifest in the numerous family owned and operated businesses, by the practice of borrowing money from relatives, by the custom of children supporting their parents when they are old, and by the extended family cooperative effort in raising the monies and other tangibles necessary in sending children to school and in celebrating weddings and funerals.

The family is also an educational unit, for the public schools in Italy in the early 1900's provided little more than a year or two of formal schooling for the children in the villages. Today more education is available but the best education is not easily accessible, both physically and emotionally, and in fact does little to prepare one for the various occupations available to villagers. And so the extended family has acted in this vacuum to socialize their young into the habits and values which will serve them in good stead and to train them into the trades with the help of family members or friends who are practitioners, a sort of informal apprenticeship.

In the legal sense, the family has also had to act as a self-contained group throughout the centuries of instability in Italy. Within the extended family, social control is maintained over its members regarding interfamily disputes and when contentions arise with outsiders, the family acts as a single unit protecting and defending its own against the others.

In the medical realm, again we find that doctors, hospitals and prescription drugs have not been readily available in the rural villages of southern Italy. When someone is ill, family members offer suggestions or treatment and must be knowledgeable about the proper usage of local herbs as remedies. The need for a cohesive family unit is strongly reinforced when one is ill and must depend upon kin.

As far as general social and emotional problems are concerned, we are talking about a more intangible area of needs. In the absence of specialists or specialized institutions, the family acts as psychologist, psychiatrist, marriage counsellor and social worker. Within familial bounds, social activities are planned and carried out symbolizing family unity. One always has a coterie of friends available from the pool of relatives. It is not surprising therefore to find as a result that the individual person thinks of herself more as a social being and has difficulty imagining herself as an individual, separate from her family. In fact, a person without close family ties is pitied.

One point which should be made absolutely clear is that the Italian family grew into and maintained its strong social unity out of necessity. They needed each other in the above mentioned ways, as well as others. This should not be interpreted to mean that everyone within each extended family has great love and closeness with all others. Although the potential is there and there are many instances of warm loving relationships, we also find instances of discord and distrust.

Within the family unit roles are basically assigned by age and sex. There are of course further refinements but it will be useful to begin with an understanding of what it means to be a man, a woman and a child.

The Male Role

Southern Italians hold certain ideals for the role of the man which can be seen to embody values which would contribute to survival and security in their difficult circumstances. Of primary importance is patience, a waiting for the right moment for action and then decisive activity. Argumentativeness is quite appreciated and expected since it is a form of social activity which gives a man the opportunity to explore various possibilities and demonstrates that he does not make decisions lightly or too quickly. Thus the male is regarded a both agressive and impassive. He should cultivate and be able to control his own capabilities exemplifying self-reliance and self-control. Traits such as hard work, self-denial, firmness of spirit and determination are admired. Above all else, he should be able to keep things to himself, provide well for his family and be noncooperative with authorities.

The most admired males are those who have a sense of honor which means being able to protect one's family and to advance their security and power. Since this is done not by being noble, but by being clever, foxy and shrewd, it is considered undesirable to be too good, flamboyant or impetuous. In fact, the truly serious man is one who maintains a low profile, preferring to accumulate power and material security in as unobtrusive a way as possible, avoiding conflict unless the family itself is threatened.

In their relationships with other men, again the rule is the golden mean and a certain cautiousness. Older men deserve a measure of respect. Relatives and close friends (usually *paesani*–those from the same village) are those whom a man can joke with, ridiculing everyday life, themselves and each other in a personal way, and engaging in playful physical contact. To behave in such intimate fashion with distant acquaintances or outsiders is thought to be disgraceful behavior. Similarly any excesses are considered bad; drunkenness or excessive competitiveness in games or public displays of affection for females are frowned upon as indicating a lack of self-control or seriousness.

The Female Role

While the southern Italian male is supposed to embody impassiveness and aggression, the female represents warmth and tenderness. The male is the ostensible head of the family; the female the core. Ladies are the ones who are supposed to give vent to emotions for the whole family. Thus at funerals and other emotional events where the males remain impassive, the females can be counted upon for dramatic emotional reactions.

The good woman, like the male, is serious about life. Ideally it is her role to maintain her virginity until marriage, to be faithful to her husband (above all else), bear and raise children, be skillful in numerous household skills, attend to religious duties, and exude more amorphous life-supporting qualities. She is admired for being neat and clean, promoting her natural beauty and sensuality without artificiality.

Like the male role, the female role is also one where artfulness in dealing with others is admired. The female is in charge of the daily household operation–responsible for handling the money, raising the children with good character, and solving everyday problems. Thus the success of the family is regarded as her responsibility as much as it is the male's, who only interferes sporadically when he feels things are not going as they should. And to fulfill the ideals of womanliness, she must be shrewd and clever also in arranging for good marriages for the children, bargaining when shopping and extracting gossip which she needs to know. Argumentativeness for her is also desirable indicating that she cannot be taken advantage of.

Her role is then in some ways similar to the male except that her chief domain is the household and she is the emotional spokesperson for the family. If she works outside the house in any capacity, it is the type of work which will not interfere with her family duties and she is expected to slip right back into her primary role when she leaves work.

Children

Children are prized highly by the Italians. Their bias toward having many sons simply emanates from the practical viewpoint that sons are more likely to contribute to the family's financial welfare.

Parental ideals for children can be encapsulated by the desire that they be well educated.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE SOUTHERN ITALIAN PEASANT FAMILY IN ITALY AND THE FIRST AND SECOND GENERATION ITALIAN FAMILY IN AMERICA*

Southern Italian Peasant Family in Italy	1st Generation Southern Italian Family in America	2nd Generation Southern Italian Family in America
A. *General Characteristics:*		
1. Patriarchal	Fictitiously patriarchal	Tends to be democratic
2. Stationary	Mobile	High degree of mobility
3. Active community life	Active in Italian neighborhood	Active in American community
4. Children live for parents	Children live for themselves	Parents live for children
5. Many family celebrations	Few family celebrations	Christmas and Thanksgiving only
6. Strong in-group solidarity	Weakened in-group solidarity	Little in-group solidarity
7. Many children	Fair number of children	Few children
B. *Roles and Statuses:*		
1. Father has high status	Father loses high status	Father shares his status with family
2. Mother center of home only; does not work for wages	Mother may work for wages and belongs to some clubs	Mother reserves time for much social life and work for wages
3. Women are educated for marriage only	Women receive some formal education	Emphasis is on general education
C. *Interpersonal Relations:*		
1. Husband & wife must not show affection	They tolerate it in married children	Husband & wife may be demonstrative
2. Boys are superior to girls	They are regarded as superior	Still regarded as superior but girls have high status also
3. Selection of mate by parents	Selection of mate by individual with parental consent	Selection of mate by individual regardless of parental consent
4. Must marry someone in same village	At least same region and religion	Increasing marriages outside nationality and religion
5. Dowry rights	No dowry	No dowry
6. No birth control	Some birth control	Birth control is the rule
7. Sex matters are not discussed in family	Not discussed in family	Increasingly discussed in family
8. No divorce allowed	Not allowed, but some do divorce	Religion forbids it, but it is practiced
9. Desertion is rare	Desertion is rare	Desertion is rare
10. Family provides a specific way of life	Family is in conflict	Family reflects confused American situation but marginality is weakened

*Adapted from Paul J. Campisi, "Ethnic Family Patterns: The Italian Family in the United States," *American Journal of Sociology*, 53:444-446. May, 1948. From *The Italian American Family* by Lydio Tomasi, Center for Migration Studies, N. Y.

This does not mean well schooled and in fact is quite contrary to attainment of academic degrees. A child who does very well in school and goes on to study at a university may secure a well-paying job but this is small compensation for the fact that he or she would be lost to the world of her home village.

Contadini parents want their children to learn very well the values and skills which will perpetuate and benefit the family, in other words the appropriate sex role. They do not like for them to become too bookish or out of touch with the realities of having to work with their hands.

To this end, children are raised within the extended family with limited schooling by outsiders, learning through their own experiences the maxims and experiences of others. The older siblings are expected to care for the younger ones. The eldest son in particular has to assume a great deal of responsibility. In turn, younger siblings are expected to listen to and at times obey the older ones. Children are taught to have respect for adults, especially elderly relatives and this serves to perpetuate the traditional family system.

Although in a sense it may seem that children are rather tightly controlled, in fact parents are pleased with and to some extent anticipate rebellion and high spirits, which indicate a forceful, bright child who needs a firm rein but not too firm as to break his or her spirit. Likewise foolishness and lack of self-control are not uncommon behaviors of adolescents and this is regarded by some with amusement as a temporary flightiness which will phase into the proper adult seriousness when one is married.

Of course, after marriage children ideally maintain close ties with their parents. A number of authors claim that these ties are stronger between children and their mother than with the father since he is viewed as a more distant authority figure. It has also been suggested that after marriage husbands tend to have stricter allegiance to their mothers than to their wives. The same thing cannot be said of the relationship between married daughters and their fathers.

Social Stratification

In Italy there is a clear-cut division among the people on social grounds. There are several distinct classes, each of which is capable of division and sub-classes.

1) The aristocracy (*aristocrazia*) is made up of either the noble families of long standing, having their wealth chiefly in estates, or of citizens—government officials, bankers, business and professional men—who by reason of their wealth, success or service, frequently receive recognition. This class has come to be numerous as titles are hereditary.

2) The middle class is formed of the active professional and military people. They are mostly urban.

3) The clergy are in a class by themselves. Some of them are of noble lineage, men of education and high culture; others came up from the ranks, winning their way through merit or connections. The tendency is for the clergy to stratify into ecclesiastics, orthodox servants of the Church, and free thinkers.

4) The peasanty or *contadini,* once heavily exploited and the so-called forgotten workers of the soil, form the base of the pyramid of Italian society, and continue to support the whole superstructure.

In the north the *cantadini* own the land, live comfortably, take an interest in education, and participate actively in political life, so that their lot has not been so intolerable. In the south, this was almost the reverse. It has only been in the last thirty years or so that their life has been changed somewhat. This was due in part to government land reforms and the influence of America in Europe during and after World War II, and through the Marshall Plan.

Even today the southern Italian works very hard. He lives for the most part abstemiously. Fresh meat is still an article of diet with him only on certain occasions like New Year's Day or on other holidays. Bread made from his own wheat, vegetables, cheese, dried meat products from his own pigs, poultry products and fruit along with wine or beer and pasta or soup are typical of his daily diet.

GLOSSARY

Albertisti - a nationalistic political party of the mid-1800's that thought Austria must be driven from Italy.

baccalaurea - degree given after the *maturita* which is passed upon completion of high school. This is needed in order to attend the university.

Berbers - a group of nomads who occupied North Africa, in particular the Sahara. The Moors are a sub-group of the Berbers.

Black and Whites - the two parties formed by a split in the Guelf Party. The Whites believed that the church was corrupt and needed reformation; the Blacks supported the Pope.

Byzantine - pertaining to the Eastern Roman Empire seated in Constantinople and the style of art and architecture that developed there.

calcio - the Italian name for football that we in the U.S. call soccer.

cannoli - a pastry shell rolled and filled with either ricotta cheese or cream and candied fruit.

Charlemagne - Holy Roman Emperor in 800 who united Germany and Italy under Christian rule. His reign is called the Carolinian rule.

capitone - fried eels eaten particularly in southern Italy.

ceppo - pyramidal structure with shelves that hold candy and gifts at Christmas time which is decorated with colored paper and ribbons.

commare or *mare* - female godparents. Older ladies are called *madrine* or *zia* (aunt).

compari or *pari* - male godparents. Older men are called *padrini* or *zio* (uncle).

comparaggio - fictive kinship, meaning the enlargement of the family unit through close friendship rather than blood.

contadini - Italian peasantry

diploma di perito - the diploma awarded after completion of the *instituto* in Italy. It is like a license to practise a trade.

Etruscans - people occupying the central part of Italy from 1000 B. C. who built up a strong empire as far south as Rome.

Fascism - an autocratic system of government that suppresses all freedom, headed by an absolute dictator, such as Benito Mussolini in Italy from 1922 to 1945; the *Fasci* party.

Gauls - the Celtic inhabitants of the northern Roman Empire

gelati - ice cream

Gli Azzurri - the name of the Italian national soccer team

Goths - "barbarians" from Germany who invaded Italy in the third and fifth centuries

Guelfs and Ghibellines - two political parties formed in the thirteenth century in Italy. The former supported the popes and resented the intervention of the Empire in Italian affairs; the latter opposed the power of the Church in temporal affairs.

istituto - vocational or professional senior high school. There are many different types of *istituti*, one of which is the *istituto magistrale* which trains teachers.

laurea - the degree given from Italian universities which is the equivalent of the master's degree in the U.S.

liceo - five years of academic school after the eighth grade in Italy.

Lombards - A Germanic tribe from the Danube area who settled in northern Italy circa 600 A.D. and ruled northern and central Italy until 774.

mafie - small bands of bandits in western Sicily, originally formed as a self-help system of retaliation against the French and Spanish rulers who kept the area oppressed and illiterate.

mal occhio - *il mal occhio* refers to the evil eye or the spell cast upon a person by another who wishes him evil.

maturita - the exam taken after high school that enables the student to go to the university.

Medici - a family from Florence who ruled that city in the fifteenth century and stimulated artistic activity. The *Medici* remained one of Florence's most powerful families until the mid-1700's when the last of them died.

Mezzogiorno - that part of Italy south of Rome which is very poor and mainly agricultural. Most of the Italian-Americans emigrated from this part of Italy.

Normans - originally called Vikings, the Normans moved south and settled in France in 900 and adopted French ways and language. They were adventurers and in 1015 landed in Sicily and established their rule there that lasted until 1250.

padrone - this means boss or leader and was the name given to the work agents who hired Italian laborers and shipped them to the U.S. on a contract basis.

paesani - those who are of the same village. In the U.S. *paesan'* is used among Italians to refer to a person from any part of Italy.

pastiria di grano - a wheat pie eaten in southern Italy.

presepio - the nativity scene or creche set out at Christmas.

Reformisti - a political party of the mid-1800's that believed in cooperation between the people and the rulers.

scuola di avviamento - vocational junior high school which completes compulsory education for non-academic students.

scuola materna - kindergarten that is optional and public for ages three to six.

scuola media - three-year academic junior high school, for ages eleven to fourteen which qualifies the student for the *liceo*.

torrone - a type of candy eaten in Italy

Vandals - a Teutonic tribe that invaded Rome in 455 A.D. and pillaged the city.

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Additional Reading for the Unit on Italy and the Italians

Boccaccio, Giovanni *Decamerone*. One hundred stories that show different aspects of the social life in Italy during the 1300's.

Cellini, Benvenuto *The Life of Benvenuto Cellini, An Autobiography*. An almost unbelievable account of the exploits of Benvenuto Cellini, one of the most gifted sculptor/jewelers the world has ever known. He was also a great adventurer.

Burckhardt, Jacob *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*. A beautifully written history of the Italian Renaissance and the world of Michelangelo, Dante, Machievelli, and Leonardo, first published in 1860.

Machievelli *The Prince*. A political novel of the Pre Renaissance era in Florence in which the author explains his ideas of government and ways in which the Medici could drive out the foreign invaders.

Manzoni, Alessandro *I Promessi Sposi*. Written in the early 1800's, this is a good example of the political novel. It is set in northern Italy and shows the corruption of the clergy and the struggle between the peasants and noblemen.

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Polo, Marco *Il Milione*. A description of the adventures of Marco Polo dictated by him, originally written in French and later translated into Italian.

Radcliffe, Ann *The Italian: Or the Confessional of the Black Penitents*. A novel about the intrigues of life in Pre Renaissance Italy. There are also several other books on Italy written by Ann Radcliffe that are excellent.

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Films

Italy - Peninsula of Contrasts, 17 minutes, color, 1966. This could serve as an introduction to Italy. It depicts the geography and shows the contrasts between north and south, the ancient and modern aspects of Italian cities, and differences in the topography. Available from University of Connecticut Audio Visual Department.

Spirit of the Renaissance, 31 minutes, color, 1971. This is an excellent movie that explores the artistic and intellectual climate of Florence during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, framed against scenes from the daily life of a contemporary Florentine. Available from University of Connecticut Audio Visual Department.

Leonardo Da Vinci (Giant of the Renaissance), 25 minutes, color, 1957. A presentation of the life and work of the man who best illustrates the spirit of the Renaissance. Leonardo is shown as an inventor, architect, painter, sculptor, and scientist. Available from the University of Connecticut Audio Visual Department.

Michelangelo, 32 minutes, color, 1965. London, Paris, Florence and Rome are used as backgrounds for this film about the art of Michelangelo. The Sistine Chapel, the Last Judgment and the statues for the Tomb of Pope Julius are beautifully presented. Available from University of Connecticut Audio Visual Department.

Italian Children (Harvest Time in Umbria) 11 minutes, black and white, 1950. Pictures the activities in the daily life of farm children in the province of Umbria. Shows home environment and children participating in farm work particularly in the picking and processing of olives. The film illustrates the role of family festivities and musical enjoyment in the lives of Italian children, and features market day activities in Assisi. Available from Indiana State University A.V. Center, Educational Motion Pictures, Bloomington, Indiana 47401

Italy: Progress Amidst the Past, 20 minutes, color, 1967. Outlines the principle differences between north and south Italy. Shows efforts of the people to raise their standard of living. Explains the economic importance of the tourist trade. Available from Indiana State University A.V. Center, Educational Motion Pictures, Bloomington, Indiana 47401

Italy: The Land and the People, 14 minutes, color. A survey of agriculture, industry, principle cities, and culture from the Po Valley along the Apennines and coastal lands to the islands of Sicily and Sardinia. Available from Indiana State University A.V. Center, Educational Motion Pictures, Bloomington, Indiana 47401

Italian Farm Family, 11 minutes, color. Portrays a day in the life of a rural family of southern Italy with an insight into the duties and responsibilities of each member of the family. It suggests that there are common needs in every family and proposes that a comparison be made between this family and other families. Available from Indiana State University A.V. Center, Educational Motion Pictures, Bloomington, Indiana 47401

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1. Construct a relief map of Italy.
2. Create a time line illustrating all of the major cultural influences in Italian history.
3. There are numerous interesting topics for library research on Italy. The following are just a few of the possibilities:
    a. Marco Polo's travels
    b. The lives of famous Italians
    c. Development of the opera
    d. Carrara marble
    e. Giuseppe Garibaldi and his "Red Shirts"
    f. Fasci party
    g. Italian educational system
    h. The lives of some of the most important saints - St. Anthony; St. Lucia; St. Michael
4. Make a mosiac painting.
5. Attend the performance of an Italian opera. Listen to operatic records or tapes. Study the history of the Connecticut (or a local) Opera Association - invite one of the members to speak to the class about their activities.
6. As a class or an individual project, a survey could be made of Italian immigrants in the community, to find out why they left Italy.
7. Carve the figure of a person out of wood, stone or a substitute material such as soap.
8. Make cheese.
9. Collect information about all of the Italian-made products available in your community.
10. Visit a Montessori school.
11. Learn a song in Italian or Latin.
12. Invite an Italian to teach the class a few Italian phrases or words.
13. Using an English dictionary, try to determine what percentage of English words are derived from Latin.
14. Read some famous books or stories written by Italians: *The Divine Comedy, The Prince, Pinocchio* and other folk stories, and *The Leopard.*
15. Listen to and compare recent popular music in Italy and the U. S.
16. Attend current Italian films.
17. Play some Italian games: *bocce, morla, padrone*, card games, etc.
18. Cook and eat Italian foods from different provinces.
19. Put on skits contrasting the family life of southern rural Italians with that of Americans.
20. Make dolls dressed in the folk costumes from different regions in Italy.
21. Learn the *tarentella* (the national dance) as well as some regional dances.

III

ITALIAN-AMERICANS IN CONNECTICUT

It is estimated that in 1975 one out of every three persons living in Connecticut is of Italian ancestry. Translated into actual numbers, this means that there are over one million Italo-Americans in the state. Another source sets 400,000 as an estimated figure. Clearly it would be difficult to get exact numbers on this but we can reasonably assume that Italian-Americans comprise a large percentage of Connecticut's population. Before we describe some of the social and cultural characteristics of the Italians, we should divide up this very large group into smaller units according to the three factors which have had the greatest impact on these characteristics.

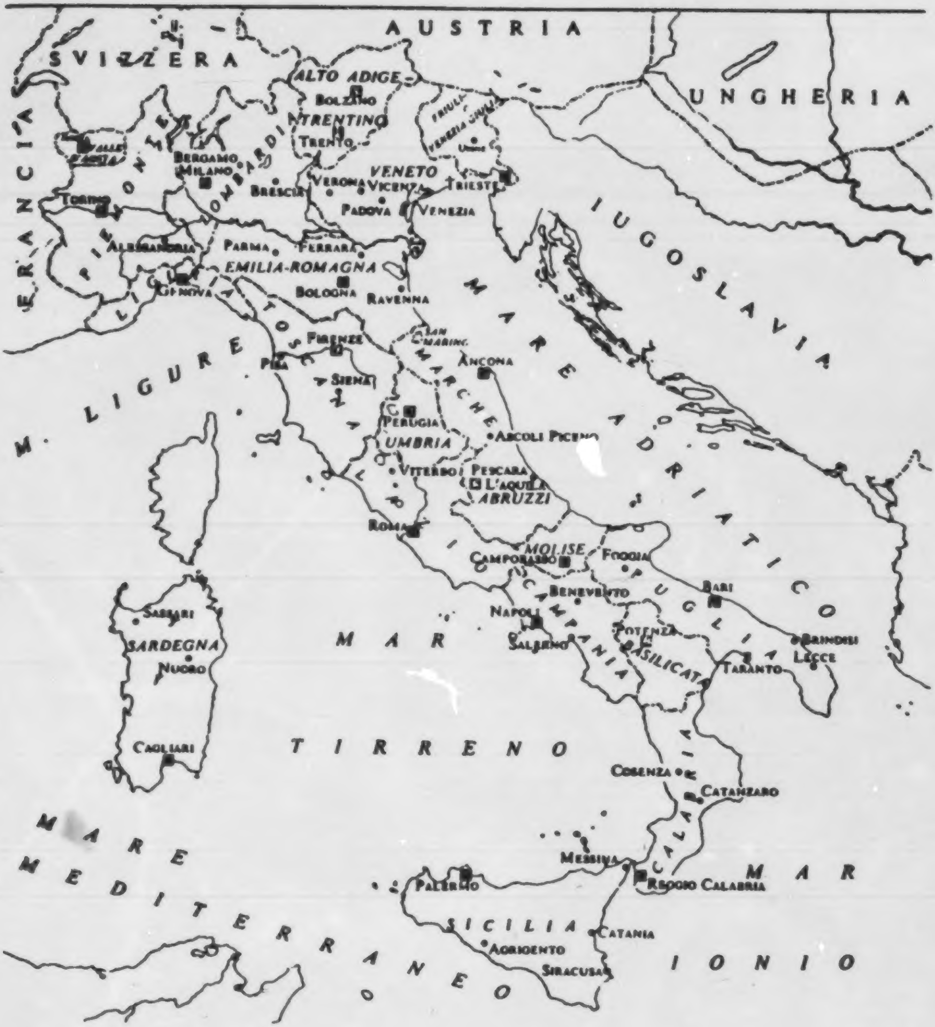
A. The first is regionalism in Italy. The country has been united for only a short period in its recent history and has many natural geographic features which also have contributed to the development and maintenance of distinctive customs. Although many were acquainted with the national Italian language, immigrants who came to Connecticut from northern Italy spoke certain dialects and brought with them lifestyles somewhat different from the vast majority of immigrants who emigrated from the six southern provinces (Sicily, Calabria, Puglia, Basilicata, Campania, and Abruzzi). In fact, there were even differences between people who came from neighboring villages in the same province. This ethnocentrism within villages is well expressed by a word, *campanilismo,* derived from *campana* (bell) and *campanile* (church tower), which refers to a way of looking at the world which largely refuses to extend socio-cultural contact beyond where the bell in the village church can be heard. We can say then, that when Italians arrived in Connecticut they already had some variety in social and cultural characteristics because of regionalism in Italy.

B. The second factor which accounts for the variety in social and cultural characteristics of Italian-Americans in Connecticut is generation.

First generation - The first generation are the immigrants. We should keep in mind that although a few Italians came earlier, the largest numbers arrived in the United States in the late 1800's and early 1900's, so that at present most of the members of this first generation group have either died or are quite elderly. Of course, the process of immigration continues to this day. In 1970 alone 24,397 Italians immigrated to the United States. There is then also a small population of first generation Italian Americans in Connecticut today.

The first generation came primarily from economically poor agricultural villages in the southern provinces (by 1924 it was recorded that a little more than 85 per cent of the Italian immigrants were from the south). When they arrived practical problems were their immediate concern—where would they live and how would they earn a living. In order to solve these problems, they usually stayed with relatives or *paesani* (people from the same village). As a result, "Little Italies" sprang up which were sections in major cities like Hartford, New Haven, Waterbury, New Britain, Torrington, etc., where they were in effect sealed off from the wider American society. This isolation served to nurture the maintenance of Italian ways of life (food, language, close-knit family organization, religious

REGIONS OF ITALY


AUSTRIA
SVIZZERA
UNGHERIA
FRANCIA
JUGOSLAVIA
ALTO ADIGE
BOLZANO
TRENTINO
TRENTO
FRIULI
VENEZIA GIULIA
UDINE
TRIESTE
VENETO
VERONA
VICENZA
PADOVA
VENEZIA
VALLE D'AOSTA
PIEMONTE
TORINO
ALESSANDRIA
LOMBARDIA
BERGAMO
MILANO
BRESCIA
LIGURIA
GENOVA
PARMA
FERRARA
EMILIA-ROMAGNA
BOLOGNA
RAVENNA
SAN MARINO
TOSCANA
FIRENZE
PISA
SIENA
MARCHE
ANCONA
ASCOLI PICENO
PERUGIA
UMBRIA
VITERBO
PESCARA
L'AQUILA
ABRUZZI
LAZIO
ROMA
MOLISE
CAMPOBASSO
FOGGIA
PUGLIA
BARI
BRINDISI
LECCE
TARANTO
CAMPANIA
BENEVENTO
NAPOLI
SALERNO
POTENZA
BASILICATA
CALABRIA
COSENZA
CATANZARO
REGGIO CALABRIA
M. LIGURE
MARE ADRIATICO
MAR TIRRENO
MAR IONIO
MARE MEDITERRANEO
SARDEGNA
SASSARI
NUORO
CAGLIARI
SICILIA
PALERMO
MESSINA
CATANIA
AGRIGENTO
SIRACUSA

practices), as well as regional idiosyncracies. Norwalk, for example, contains a sizeable Italian community who emigrated from the tiny island of Ischia off the coast of Naples; Hartford and Middletown have and are still attracting immigrants from certain areas of Sicily.

Grandparents of Italian immigrants who stayed in Italy

This first generation did in many cases have to work outside of "Little Italy" and learn English in order to deal with legal and governmental matters. Their disposition to remain secluded was often reinforced by the hatred and insults with which they were assaulted by American bigots who called them a number of what were meant to be derogatory names: dago, wop (which is thought to have come from the phrase, without papers, since some Italian immigrants tried to enter the United States without the necessary legal papers), and guinea. Today most of these Little Italies are gone due to redevelopement where older sections of cities have been torn down and replaced by modern high rise office buildings. Nevertheless, where immigrants are still arriving, albeit in fewer numbers, smaller Little Italies are in evidence. For instance, in Hartford the old section of Front Street has given way to modernization, but now Franklin Avenue is the new Little Italy.

Although the first generation were too preoccupied with practical concerns to spend time worrying about the more abstract problem of acculturation, they did have to face quite a conflict between the Italian culture of their homeland and American culture. Social scientists have identified at least four areas of value conflict which Italian immigrants had to deal with regarding how things ought to be. The first had to do with human beings' relationship with nature. The Italian approach has been described as more of a subjugation to nature while the Americans favor more of a mastery over nature. The second value conflict has to do with different ways of viewing time. The Italians are more oriented to the present and the Americans to the future. The third is in regard to activity. Italians are described as placing a higher value on a sense of being in itself whereas Americans seem to favor doing. The last value conflict has to do with social relationships. Italians hold collateral relations to be ideals; in other words, they view each person as the intersection point of all of their social ties. Americans, on the other hand, extol the individual and the glories of being free and independent of any long-term binding social relations.

Second generation - The second generation, the children of the immigrants, could not be so isolated as their parents because they had to cope with various American institutions —educational, economic, military—and thereby they were involved more extensively with the cultural milieu around them. As the second generation attended public schools and developed a wider interaction with American culture, they had to live in two worlds. Some social scientists have described them as a group who were nowhere culturally as they frequently rejected at least aspects of Italian culture, but were not yet totally assimilated into American ways.

There were three primary types of reactions by second generation Italian-Americans to the culture conflict.

1) Rebel reaction. This reaction embodied an attempt to reject everything Italian and embrace everything American. Rebel Italo-Americans moved out of their parents' Italian neighborhood as soon as possible, often changed their names to those which sounded less Italian, preferred to marry non-Italians, and tried in every way to affiliate with the American community. They altered various aspects of their lifestyle which might brand them as Italian and desired to cut all ties with their Italian relations in an effort to lose any Italian identity and become accepted as an integral part of the American culture.

2) In-group reaction. Some of the second generation reacted quite to the opposite of the rebels in dealing with their culture conflict. They chose to remain more affiliated with Italian cultural traits. They often continued to live in Italian neighborhoods or if they moved, they still maintained very close ties there, and in many ways perpetuated the lifestyles of their parents. They preferred to marry within the Italo-American community which served to further reinforce their Italian identity. If they did marry outside, they continued to exhibit pride in keeping up various Italian customs.

3) Apathetic reaction. There were some Italian-Americans of the second generation who dealt with the culture conflict by refusing to make choices between Italian and American lifestyles. Instead they followed the social and cultural patterns around them wherever they happened to be.

Third and fourth generations - The third and fourth generations of Italian-Americans are now mostly young adults with children. The particular mixture of Italian and American social and cultural characteristics which they represent depends somewhat upon which reaction their parents had to their culture conflict. A few are ardent advocates for organizing Italo-Americans and wish to revive some of the traditional Italian customs. Some maintain a sense of pride in their Italian-American identity and still practice a few of the customs brought from Italy by their immigrant ancestors while recognizing that in a generation or two all of these Italian ways may be lost. Others regard themselves as Americans because of intermarriage with other ethnic groups and because they do not wish to preserve their Italian traditions.

C. The third factor which has influenced the socio-cultural characteristics of Italo-Americans in Connecticut is something referred to by anthropologists as the Great and Little Traditions. This phenomenon is found in societies, like Italy, where there has been a static feudal system with a distinct wealthy class owning the land and a very large percentage of the people as poor agricultural workers who own very little. What develops are two separate and yet interrelated socio-cultural systems.

The Great Tradition is the culture of the wealthy class. Much of what we have described about the country of Italy is, in fact, their Great Tradition: the Roman Catholic faith, the opera, their artistic genius, the Italian language, fine silks, racing cars, high cuisine and *la dolce vita*. The Little Tradition of the *contadini* is quite different: folk beliefs, folk music and dance, and a strong propensity toward working hard at manual labor and valuing the serious and the practical. Socially speaking, a cohesive bilateral extended familial system is common to both wealthy and poor.

It would be an oversimplification to say that northern Italians represent the Great Tradition and southern Italians the Little Tradition. But to some extent this is true because the northern areas of the country are more prosperous. This is not to say that there are no poor people in northern Italy.

By far, most Italians who came to Connecticut represent the Little Tradition which to varying degrees has mixed in with some of the Great Tradition (for example, folk-Catholicism). Thus, we find a Torrington man from an economically poor southern village who regards being able to attend the Metropolitan Opera in New York as one measure of his success in fulfilling his dreams after many years of hard work. And another man living in Glastonbury, with a similar background, who has absolutely no interest in or knowledge of the opera.

To assist us then in understanding Italo-Americans in Connecticut it is necessary for us to appreciate the Little Tradition and avoid concentrating too much upon the exotic glamours of the Great Tradition.

This is a general picture of Italian-Americans in the state of Connecticut today. Making up a sizeable percentage of the state's population, their social and cultural characteristics vary according to where their roots originated in Italy, how far removed they are from the first generation and their socio-economic background. What the future holds for them when most of the immigrants have died could be the subject for lively debate. One thing is certain, there will be some for whom any sense of Italian affiliation is lost. It seems that for others there is a choice and many may choose to define themselves as Italian-Americans, creating their own particular cultural blend.

THE FAMILY

From various interviews which have been conducted and the scanty writing available on the subject, it appears that changes in the Italian family following immigration to Connecticut are generally quite similar to those described for Italians in the United States. The chart on the following page by L. Tomasi summarizes these changes.

Our informants told us that their two primary problems after arriving in Connecticut were to find a place to live and then a job. All, except for the very first arrivals in each family, were helped by their relatives already here who often had sent them some or all of the passage money, had met them in New York, found a place for them to live and had given them assistance in their job searches.

The pattern we find is that a few pioneering family members who were the first to arrive, frequently returned to their homes in Italy when they had saved some money, then came back to Connecticut to earn more. These were usually men who worked very hard and saved every penny so they could afford to send for their wives and children. One man, for instance, worked at the Comstock Ferre Company in Wethersfield and lived with his uncle in Hartford. He walked to and from work each day to save the ten-cent bus fare as he was trying to bring his wife and daughter here.

When the wives arrived, or immigrants married here, they naturally set up housekeeping and often continued to save in order to send passage money to other relatives—parents, siblings, cousins, nephews and nieces. Clearly within the first generation, family solidarity was very strong as its members still had great need of each other.

One older man whom we talked with, recalled a rather dramatic incident in his family history which illustrates very well how family members rallied to help one another. His brother had been living in a boarding house with an Italian family in the vicinity of Torrington. They had a teen-age daughter, whom they had pledged in marriage to a man in his fifties. The brother talked with the girl, who did not like her parents' marriage plans for her. Without her parents' knowledge they stole away in the middle of the night and stayed with a respectable Italian family who lived nearby. The girl slept with the mother, and the boy stayed in their utility room. The next day they returned to the boarding house, where the girl's family was in an uproar. Her male relatives threatened to kill the boy.

Our informant tells how, upon hearing of the trouble, he hurried over to defend his brother. Meanwhile, the girl's fiance had decided that he didn't want to marry her, now that her reputation was ruined, and everyone agreed that the boy and girl should marry.

It should not be surmised, however, that perfect solidarity existed in the families of first generation Italo-Americans in Connecticut. Another older man described his experiences in the early 1900's when his uncle living in Hartford sent him the passage money and took him in to live in his home. He got his first jobs through relatives and later worked for a while in a family business. However, when he finally moved out to open a restaurant in a suburban town, he sometimes needed extra waitresses or waiters for large parties and purposefully did not hire relatives, for he felt that he could not demand the same standards of behavior that he could with strangers. Furthermore, by hiring relatives, he would get himself entangled in a wider mesh of obligations.

The degree of family interdependence does seem to relate to generation, for we find it strongly in evidence among those who are immigrating to Connecticut in 1975. Young married men in their twenties will refuse to take even a part-time job without their parents' approval, and when they work, all money is turned over to their mothers. Many other examples can be found to illustrate the degree to which newly immigrated Italians help each other within their families.

Traditional sex roles were also maintained within the first generation. One of our older male informants told about his exploits as a restaurant owner in the early 1900's and his tales clearly extol some of the virtues of the ideal Italian male, particularly cleverness and the ability to avoid confrontations by using one's wits. When he first opened his restaurant he had a problem with a few men who would occupy a table for hours, having one cup of coffee among them and making rude remarks about ladies who came in with a boyfriend or husband. Finally one day he poured a lot of salt into the coffee and told them that if they drank that, the next cup would have Epsom salts in it. They bothered him no more. Later, when prohibition was in force, everyone knew that he made his own wine. People would ask him for some with their dinner. It was, of course, illegal to serve it to others, and yet if he refused, he might lose customers. So he served them, but gave them spoiled wine which was really vinegar. They never asked twice. He did ignore any liquor brought into the restaurant and drunk by the customers. When the authorities inspected and found this, he simply explained that he was too busy cooking and serving to watch what everyone did.

After finding a place to live and a job, the next problem perceived by our informants was language. This was the point where they felt the process of acculturation most strongly. Of course, it was possible for many living in a Little Italy to avoid learning much English. However, some attended special classes in English or informally picked up the necessary vocabulary for work and filling out government forms. But the children who had to attend school learned the new language most quickly. It has been said that this was one source of change in the family, for there were times when parents had to depend upon their children for translation, and this particularly undermined the authority of the father and older family members.

Sometimes the cultural gap which has developed between generations is dealt with humorously. One second-generation Italo-American teacher described how she and her husband joke about their older immigrant relatives who cover their furniture with sheets of plastic to preserve the newness of what to them is a prominent symbol of their success in Connecticut.

Sometimes the generations slip into different worlds. A young co-ed at the University of Connecticut who recently immigrated from a little village in Calabria, said that her brother had earned his Bachelor's degree this past year. Even a year later, his parents still did not understand what this degree meant.

And sometimes there is open conflict as a result of the culture gap. One young man, a third generation Italo-American, was trying to study at the University of Connecticut. His father died several years ago and he worked at several jobs to support his mother and younger siblings. When his brother and sister finished high school, he quit his jobs and went back to his studies. His mother was determined to force him into the traditional role of the eldest male providing for the family. She refused to pay the household bills and moved out, hoping that the lack of electricity and gas would compel him to discontinue his studies and go back to work.

The traditional role of women also changes. As with men and children, when expectations are similar the change is rather painless, but if not, there are terrific strains placed upon family relations. One lady from Stamford told us that this was the reason her marriage ended in divorce. Her husband and she had both come to Connecticut as children. However, when they married she had become acculturated into the idea of a greater degree of freedom for women than he had.

Aside from being acculturated to different roles, the two greatest factors in changing the Italo-American family have been physical mobility and intermarriage with other ethnic groups. With increased transportation facilities, the children and grandchildren of immigrants have moved out far and wide in their search for good jobs. Coupled with their not infrequent intermarriages with the Irish and other ethnic groups, which dilute the strength of the Italian customs shared by the family, we find the family cohesiveness and traditional roles of the first generation Italo-American in Connecticut are drastically changed by the third and fourth generations.

A HISTORY OF ITALIAN IMMIGRATION TO CONNECTICUT

When Columbus came upon the New World, he could not envision what his discovery would mean to the working classes of Europe. For many centuries the worker had led a life which was difficult and degrading. He was socially and economically tied to the conditions in which birth had placed him. If the records coming down to us are trustworthy, it would seem that the laborer of the Middle Ages was deprived of every birthright that we take for granted. We, of course, cannot ascertain exactly the degree to which news of the New World in 1493 affected the laborer. But it would appear that people were gradually stirred into a sense of adventure.

Italians have shared the life of America since Columbus' discovery. Throughout the development of this country, citizens of Italian birth or descent have played an important part. This fact has not been generally recognized, perhaps because the number was small.

Colonial Period

The largest group of Italians to settle in North America during the early colonial period consisted of about two hundred Protestants from the Piedmont valley in northern Italy. Usually called "Waldensians", they came here via Holland, arriving in New Amsterdam in the spring of 1657. A few weeks later some went to Delaware (New Amstel), New Castle, and a smaller group settled in Stony Brook, New York.

Early contact between the colonies and the Italian states was restricted by the British so very few colonists visited Italy. But even before the American Revolution, the colonies such as Connecticut were importing Italian products, musical instruments, sheet music, olive oil, vermicelli, and art objects, usually through

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England, although some ships crossed the ocean directly. Some stopped in New London, New Haven and other Connecticut ports.

Later, when the colonists became interested in the Corsican struggle for independence, a knowledge of Italy and her problems gained some prominence in the north as can be evidenced in various early articles of the *Connecticut Courant*, first published in Hartford in 1764. Genoa sold Corsica to France in 1768. From history books, we learn that there were many Italian noblemen and some peasants in Washington's army during the Revolution. An Italian named Caesare Botta wrote a *History of the American Revolution*.

While much can be said based upon the many books written on the contributions of Italians in America before the Civil War, such as the one written by Giovanni Schiavo, we will try to limit ourselves to the impact of Italians on Connecticut.

According to the early history of Tolland and Windham counties, the Angell family name is supposed to be derived from Angel, a town in France, although some authorities claim that the family is of Venetian origin. The first recorded member of the family in this country was Thomas Angell, who was born in 1618 and served as an apprentice to Roger Williams.

They came to America together from Bristol, England, in 1630 and landed in Boston, Massachusetts. Angell and Williams eventually settled on a tract of land given to Williams by the Indians, from which the town of Providence, Rhode Island, arose. Thomas Angell died, leaving descendants who were among the most distinguished citizens of North Providence and vicinity as well as of Connecticut. One of his descendants, Job Angell, a very successful farmer and large landowner in the town of Plainfield, Connecticut, resided in Central Village, Connecticut. He died on his farm in October, 1853, at the age of 86. His son, John Angell, was born in 1802 in Central Village and was a prosperous businessman. Descendants of the Angell family continue to live on in this state.

One early colonial visitor to Italy from Connecticut was John Winthrop, Jr., who later became the sixth Governor of Connecticut. He travelled in Italy during the 1630's and 1640's and had an extensive collection of Italian books in his library in Connecticut.

William Diodati, the grandson of the famous Protestant theologian who translated the Bible into Italian, settled in Connecticut in 1715. William's granddaughter married John Griswold, son of the seventeenth Governor of Connecticut, Matthew Griswold. A monument to William Diodati and his wife was erected in the New Haven Public Square, but was removed in 1821.

Rev. Leo da Saracena, O. F. M., first known Italian priest in Connecticut

In 1771, the first Jews to settle in New Haven were from Venice, according to the *Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles*.

It was in this period of the 1790's and early 1800's that we see Italian names appearing from time to time in newspaper ads of the *Connecticut Courant* (now known as the *Hartford Courant*). These people mentioned were travelling artists and musicians, teachers of voice and instruments, as well as several scientists. One of the first Italian travellers of distinction was the Milanese botanist, Count Luigi Castiglioni, who visited the United States in 1785. He stayed here for two years and travelled to all of the thirteen states. He kept a diary on his travels which was published on his return to Italy. In this account he wrote about his experiences in and impressions of Connecticut. He visited Horse Neck, Norwalk, Fairfield, Stratford, New Haven, Durham, Middletown, Wethersfield, Hartford and Windsor. He was entertained by Ezra Stiles, president of Yale College. The Count was quite favorably impressed by Hartford. He wrote, "The inhabitants are hale and hearty, and the fair sex is distinguished both for its shapeliness and rosy complexion."[14]

It wasn't until 1820 that the Federal Government began keeping census records and therefore an accurate account of how many Italians actually came here may never be known. However, it seems that there is every reason to believe their number is much higher than what it has been said to be.

During the first half of the 1800's, Italian born artists, sculptors and instructors of music, language and instruments, clearly made their mark in Connecticut. A Florentine sculptor, Giorgio Cardelli, who had worked on the nation's Capitol also came to Hartford briefly in 1819-20 to do some work for Governor Trumbull. Liberato Cardella, a Sicilian and a former Roman Catholic priest, who was an instructor at Mt. Pleasant Classical Institution of Italian in Amherst where he taught music and drawing, moved permanently to Hartford in 1840. Also in Hartford in 1853, we find Signor Montarsini, a professor of languages.

In 1863 at the Curtis School, Signora Marietta Giovanini and her sister, Signorina Antoinetta Erba, were in charge of the Department of Music. These ladies also taught Italian and Spanish.

In New Haven at Yale University, the records indicate that a Luigi Roberti was an instructor of Italian from 1842 to 1844. Giuseppe Artoni was also an instructor there in Italian from 1847 to 1857.

Civil War Era

Guiseppi Garibaldi, the Italian patriot, was well known in Connecticut, and was a recipient of Hartford's Col. Samuel Colt's Award consisting of an 1851 Colt Navy Belt Presentation Cap and Ball Pistol. At the beginning of northern and southern hostilities, Garibaldi was invited by the American minister at Brussels to assume a command in the Union armies. Apparently Garibaldi accepted on the condition that President Lincoln announce the abolition of slavery immediately. This Lincoln could not do and thus Garibaldi did not join the Union soldiers. Nevertheless, a regiment from New York City, "The Garibaldi Guard", was named in honor of the Italian hero. A mixture of other ethnic groups joined this Guard, including a number of Italians.

in the Union Army from their respective cities and towns. Some of these were: the famous Reverend Father Leo Rizzo da Saracena, who was a chaplain to an all-Irish regiment from New Haven; Domenico Santoro and Eugenio Baldi from Hartford; and Giuseppe Lavelli from New Britain.

After the Civil War, in the second half of the nineteenth century, "Puritan" Connecticut was transformed as thousands of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe arrived. Connecticut's factories provided work for most of them. As the population of the urban areas grew, so did the Catholic Church. These newcomers, the Italians, French Canadians, Irish, Poles and

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[14] Antonio Pace, "The Fortunes of Luigi Castiglioni, Traveler in Colonial America, With an Extract from a Recently Discovered Manuscript of His, *Viaggio nell' America Settentrionale (1785-1787)." Italian Americana,* Vol. I, No. 2, Spring 1975, p. 257.

Slavs, preferred priests who spoke their language, and thus ethnic churches were formed.

It was in 1880 that the manufacuring industries exploded. The European laborers who poured into Connecticut were an entirely different group than those who had come before this period. Prior to 1880, the majority of immigrants came from northwestern Europe. Around 1882, the new immigrants were coming from southern and southeastern Europe.

The Italian immigrants were also of a different nature than those prior to 1871 who had come mainly from northern Italy. These were mostly refugees, businessmen, students, musicians, and adventurers. During Italy's struggle for independence from 1850 to 1870, many of the patrotic leaders from noble families had to flee for safety and somecame to America for refuge. For the most part, 1871 is the year given for the beginning of southern Italian immigration. By 1880 America was welcoming five thousand Italians a year.

Ocean Passages described by Immigrants

We talked with a number of Italian immigrants, or their children, about their experiences during ocean crossings in the late 1800's or early 1900's.

1) Antonio Buccino, the oldest known continuously working barber in Great Hartford, perhaps in all of Connecticut. He said that he was sixteen when he left his native village of Teore, Province of Avellino in Campania and it was on April 10, 1907, when he boarded the ship *Italia*. It was a very rough thirty-two days across the ocean to New York. Many were ill. He himself did not become ill, maybe because of his youth and determination to come to the New World. When the ship arrived in New York, it was by mere chance that he overheard a conversation about Hartford, and so came here. He went to work, saved and eventually became somewhat prosperous. In time, he sent for his sisters and married them off, and finally he was the last to marry, having completed his family obligations. His parents never came to America. Today Buccino is a happily married man with children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

2) In another interview, at a dinner meeting in June, 1975, of the Young Italian-American Association of Hartford, one of the members discussed his very bad crossing in the early 1900's. According to him, he was only a youngster of five or six, but he remembers that they were cramped for room and had to sit on the floor of the ship. He recalls eating the food (bread, cheese and salami) that his mother had prepared especially for the crossing. He claims that they all became seasick and that the ship's provisions spoiled after a while.

3) When Domenico Strammiello came to America from his native Salandria Matera, Province di Lucania in Basilicata, his journey only took eight days on the German ship *Deutchland* from Naples to New York. At that time in 1907, work was very scarce. Nevertheless, he was able to secure a job in a hat factory. He was twenty-seven years old then, and saved enough money in a few years to be able to send for his wife and two children in 1911. By that time he was working at a shoe repair shop. Having learned the trade, he eventually became his own boss and started a shoemakers' organization and was active in the Umberto Primo Society.

4) The son of Hartford's first permanent physician, Dr. Domenico DeBonis, showed us the late Doctor's diary of his crossing. He described his journey from Italy to America on a French ship in vivid detail and drew pictures of what he saw with colored pencils, such as a sketch of one of the Azore Islands. He was an amateur artist. The crossing took place in 1892 and it was very rough going with heavy seas and high winds. The Doctor met a passenger who

was French. He told him that he was travelling to America to see the World's Fair. He was very seasick and became good friends with the Doctor. After being in his cabin for several days, the Frenchman came out to see the sight of America after docking in the East River, which was a rather depressing sight as the area looked like a slum. One look at it and he decided to stay on the ship and return home. But Dr. DeBonis was impressed with the view of the Statue of Liberty and disembarked in Brooklyn.

Dr. DeBonis learned from people in New York that Hartford did not have an Italian doctor for its large population. Prior to this he had never heard of Hartford. When he first saw the city, he liked it and decided that this would be the place to practice medicine. He was known to many as the "horse doctor", because of his love for horses and he usually rode one to his patients' homes, even when he had the opportunity to drive a car.

Dr. DeBonis came from Forenza, Province di Potenza in Basilicata, Italy. Eventually he married an Irish woman and had one son.

5) Joseph Papa was born in Floridia, Province di Siracusa in Sicily. Having received the blessing and permission of his parents to come to America, he left at about age seventeen in 1920 with some *paesani*. They talked about where they were going to go once they got to the United States. They came via France on a French ship *Caronia* and after five days in Paris they left to cross the Atlantic. It was a six-day crossing, a good trip except for the food which was inadequate. Once in America, Joseph planned to head for Winsted via New York, because he had relatives in Winsted. But in New York he met some *paesani* and stayed on and found work on construction with a friend. During the period that Joseph spent in New York, he made several trips to Winsted and Hartford to visit his relatives and other *paesani*.

In 1923 he moved to Hartford because he disliked the "fast life" of New York. His future wife's father came to Connecticut in 1908 because of *paesani* who were here working on estates as nurserymen. He moved to Hartford in 1912. Joseph met his wife at a Floridian Society Dance. He is now widowed but has several children. He is retired, but continues to work in his foundry with his son. He is a member of the Young Italian-American Association and a founding member of the Floridian Society.

6) Antonio Notarfrancesco was born in Marsiconuovo, Province di Potenza in Basilicata in 1885. He came to Hartford because his sister who was married sent for him. He arrived on March 16, 1905. He was about nineteen years old and came here on a German ship. The crossing lasted seventeen days and they stopped at five different ports. There were all kinds of people on the ship: Turks, Italians, Portuguese and Germans. Antonio boarded the ship in Naples, then went on to Sicily, Gibraltar, Portugal and finally New York. The ship also carried cargo: all kinds of animals, barrels of olive oil from Sicily, and orange juice. Tony had come with fifteen *paesani*, who went on to Philadelphia or Boston. Tony came to Hartford, and his first job was shoveling snow at the State Capitol.

After being a laborer for two years, he left Hartford and returned to Italy in 1908 to marry the girl he had left behind. They stayed in Italy one year and then Tony returned to America alone in 1909. A year later his wife followed him along with eighteen *paesani*. After that second trip on the *Duca dalla Abruzzese*, Tony never returned to Italy, nor did his wife. When Tony came back to Hartford he worked for his brother-in-law and then later on went to work for the Royal Typewriter Company. Subsequently he and his boss quit and worked together at Billings-Spencer as drill press and milling machine operators. When his boss quit, Tony followed him again, this time to Colt's. After World War I, Tony went to work for Underwood as an assembler where he stayed until his retirement in 1952.

7) Leo Pugliese was born in Saracena, Province di Cosenza, Calabria, also the birthplace of the famous Father Leo Rizzo of Winsted. He came to America in 1921 on the ship *San Giovanni*. The crossing took eighteen days and Leo was fifteen when he arrived here with his mother and brother. His father was already in Hartford and had sent for the rest of the family. Leo's father was a laborer. His future wife came on the same ship with her mother and brother. She was twelve and her father had been here for ten years before sending for the family. Leo was the founder of the Santo Leone Society in 1930.

Ethnic Neighborhoods

From 1880 to 1910 many changes were occurring in the larger cities. There was a steady flow of Italians into neighborhoods that were not originally Italian. The new Italian immigrant would head for areas where his *paesani* lived, where he could speak his native language and be understood and where he could eat Italian food. This resulted in the formation of very definite ethnic communities. Italian ghettos grew up, which have been called "Little Italies". The ideals, language and customs of the Italians were preserved because of these ethnic neighborhoods.

For the most part the early Italian immigrant was in a strange, bewildering world. He was usually poor, ignorant of the laws and customs of America and without much opportunity for learning about them except from what he observed. His contact with Americans was ordinarily with those who exploited his labor for as little pay as possible; or with his landlord who took as much as he could get. He was forced by his poverty to send his children to work. They became shoeshine boys, newspaper boys, flower girls, and factory or farm workers. The only protection which the immigrant had was his community.

There are still some well defined Italian colonies today in Connecticut. As a whole, one could say that these Italian communities were born as a nucleus in Connecticut's larger cities during the mid 1870's. They followed a rather definite pattern of growth and decay. The first stage in the process was that of organizing and building social organizations. Then came the development of social controls, supervision of youth organizations, benefit societies, celebrations of festivals, and religious functions, all in an attempt to become a self-sufficient social group.

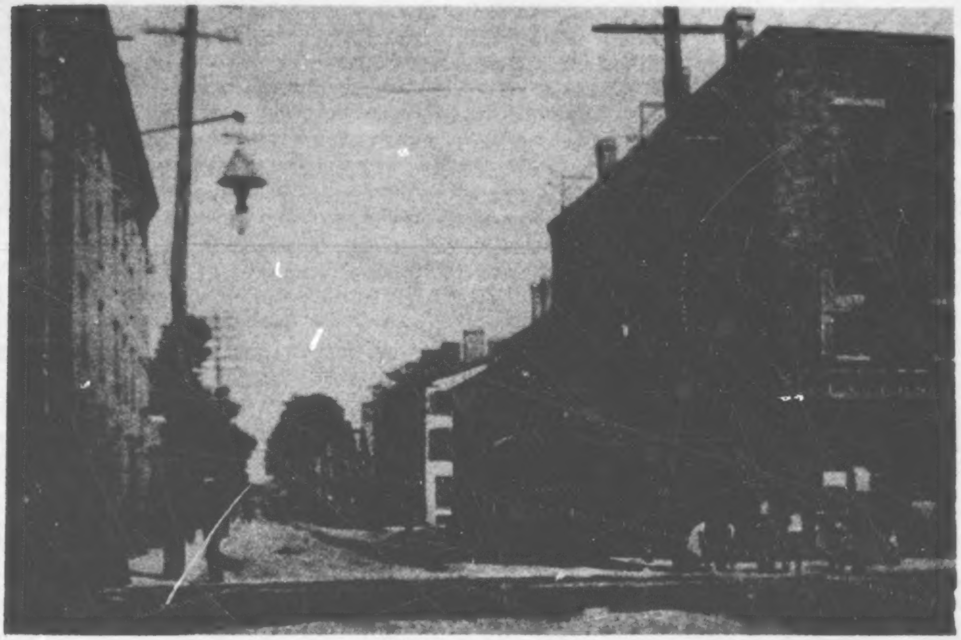
But while the development was taking place, the seeds of disintegration had already been slowly and gradually sown. The young people, especially after one generation or two, had basically learned new American ideas. The social classifications were broken down by American ideals of equality of opportunity. The ethnic neighborhood was very different from the agricultural village in Italy, and new ways of living contradicted the old world ideas.

The last stage in the process of adjustment to American life is when there is only a semblance left of what had been built in the way of religious, social, benevolent or educational institutions. Certain activities continue, some as mere forms, and others to keep alive the memories of older days.

The size of some of the Italian communities, with their continued importation of Italian immigrants, will tend to keep these ethnic neighborhoods in the second stage, halfway between growth and disintegration. There is also a new and growing trend among Italians of the third generation to keep alive some of the customs of the old days that the second generation had gradually discarded. Thus, there is hope for the preservation of some of Connecticut's "Little Italies."

There are, however, many Italo-American communities in our state that are in the last stages of decay. One factor which has accelerated the process of disintegration has been federally funded redevelopment projects, especially those of the late 1950's and early 1960's. For a number of major cities this has marked the end of the old-fashioned Italian neighborhoods.

It appears that the Italian government continues to concern itself with the welfare of its immigrants for in 1970 it established Hartford's first foreign consulate by appointing Riccardo DiLoreto, a travel agent, as the Italian vice consul. Mr. DiLoreto had been trying to open a Hartford consulate since the one in New Haven closed in 1968.



Old East Side, Hartford

Hartford

Hartford's old east side "Little Italy" around Front Street was torn down for the building of Constitution Plaza. Although Hartford lost its old Italian-American community, another clearly defined area came into being. Generally known as the whole of the south end of Hartford, it is predominately Italian-American, integrated with other ethnic groups. Franklin Avenue, the central business section, has now taken on some of the characteristics of "old Front Street". It is here that a new "Little Italy"has been reborn.

A Hartford Times article in 1974 described the south end as lemon ice and pasta and imported provolone. A walk down that two-mile strip of Franklin Avenue will reveal a true Italian neighborhood with the special smells of the dried meats, the soccer club with its red, white and green storefront, and the old women haggling with the merchant in their dialect.

The Irish, who once typified the area, are still present but in dwindling numbers, and French and Polish names can still be found on the voting lists. It's a neighborhood of blue collar workers with a deep pride in themselves and their community.

The section, with street names like Linmore, Brown and Montowese, is lined with homes of brick, wood or stucco with proud owners who intend to remain. The south end has a bright and stable future according to Peter J. Sposito, a Franklin Avenue real estate broker. He claims property values are up and that most homeowners intend to remain. "People aren't moving like in other areas—they have pride here and refuse to sell". He sees business picking up, mainly along Franklin Avenue. "People come from all over to buy at the Italian markets and bakeries". Another real estate agent agreed that the south end is "healthy". "The people are industrious . . . they try to make something of the south end . . . to keep it up".

One immigrant from Sicily who has lived in the south end for more than forty years, like many of the older Italians of the neighborhood, remembers when the south end was primarily Irish and French—when most Italians lived along Front Street and Windsor Avenue. But the renewal of the early 1960's destroyed the Italian community there. In its place now stands the concrete and glass of Constitution Plaza. The pushcarts are gone. "You could buy almost anyting from the pushcarts . . . they had a sort of charm", said the immigrant. He also remembers the Depression when "everybody had moonshine and more played the lottery than today". He said that the Italians flocked to the south end to be together, to be at ease in the Italian grocery stores, to be able to read a menu. He talked about the closeness that remains. "We have our clubs—The Sons of Italy, St. Lucia Society, and others—that still mean a lot to the people".

Luigi Cianfaglione sits at a table at Cafe Espresso on Franklin Avenue and reads about World Cup Soccer in the paper *Il Progresso*. He stops to buy the visitor an *espresso* and to talk about his neighborhood. He came here six years ago from Venezuela. He was born in Italy and left for a "better life". Now he owns a home on School Street.

In addition to the bakeries and grocery stores, a number of Italian customs are being kept alive. In 1970 Anthony Tolisano gave a new twist to an old Italian tradition. In Italy there is a custom of building detailed reproductions of the nativity scene in one's home. Tolisano continued the custom in his Hartford home. After several nights of work, he had an elaborate nativity scene. But instead of being set in Bethlehem, the birth of Christ was depicted as though it had taken place in Tolisano's native village of Saracena, a mountain village whose way of life Tolisano saw as comparable to that described in the Bible. So he used his imagination. The small isolated community of Saracena was portrayed in great detail. The simple village homes were cluttered around a majestic church, high on a hill. In peaceful caves, shepherds and farmers gathered together around a red bulb "fire", playing lutes and telling stories. Sheep could be seen around little waterholes of mirrors and winding rivers of aluminum foil. On a path was a small procession of townspeople leading the three magi to the focal point of the display, a cave where the newborn infant lay.

Just as there are Christmas customs, so there are Easter traditions. Around Easter time, second and third generation Italians sit around their table and talk about the old days of *Santa Pasqua*—Holy Easter, the Feast of the Lamb. Roasted baby lamb, goat or rabbit was the traditional Easter meal, and the Italian families who have carried out the old customs still know where to get them. Easter is Italy's biggest holiday and certain foods are eaten only on this day.

The meal begins only after each child and grandchild has kissed the right hand of the oldest members of the family, and after the grandmother has blessed the table with holy water, splashed on with a palm given to her on Palm Sunday by her children. The feast might start with soup or an antipasto consisting of hard boiled eggs, *lupino* (small yellow beans), *prosciuto* (ham), cheeses, mushrooms and marinated black olives. Lamb, macaroni, potatoes, bread, salad and wine might be served as the main course, while dessert is a meal and tradition in itself: fruit and nuts are standard holiday followers to any meal but "pasteed", a food similar to rice pudding pie, made with eggs, ricotta cheese, grated cheese, dried citron, sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves and shortening, is a delight to all who taste it. Finally, the Easter bread, shaped like a round wreath with hard boiled eggs imbedded in it for the adults, and the small bread, shaped like a doll with braided legs, for the children, is cut.

This is the taste of Easter and only the true import stores can satisfactorily provide the ingredients. At the time of this writing five of these import stores were left: the D & D Store, Mangiafico Importers Co., The Chicago Market, the Connecticut Macaroni Co., and Rafala's Food Outlet. These stores, like the many others which died out with the arrival of Constitution Plaza, carry everything imported from Italy. They are a meeting place as well as a place to buy food. Customers can still be seen stopping in the midst of shopping to throw out their arms to their *paesani* that they haven't seen for a week. Elderly women stash dollar bills in upper foundations. Children press their noses to the glass counters.

There have been several newspaper articles written over the last five years about a tiny white brick store at Grove and Columbus Blvd. in Hartford's east side. This is Hartford's last live poultry dealer, whose family has slaughtered, plucked, prepared and sold chickens, turkeys and squab since 1920 at the same location. The son of this family who has operated the Connecticut Live Poultry Store for over fifty years is Dominic (Nicky) LaTorre, known also as the "Chicken Man". According to LaTorre, "My dad bought an empty lot on this corner. We maintained the business through the crash, the war and the floods". LaTorre said he has a one man operation. "I get here at 6:30 a.m. and leave at 6:30 or 7:00 p.m. I just love coming here. I've been doing it all my life". LaTorre greets his customers by name. But he has had a difficult task remaining in his store. In 1959, with redevelopment and the widening of Front Street, he lost half of his shop. Now LaTorre has been asked to sell his entire market by Travelers Insurance Company and more lately by the City of Hartford.

There are still those who want live poultry for their cooking. Many of LaTorre's customers are immigrants accustomed to freshly killed birds. LaTorre boasts the freshest poultry anywhere and will kill and dress a chicken to your specifications. He purchases his stock on weekly jaunts to nearby farms and at the Hamden poultry auction. The peak season is Christmas and Thanksgiving. Some weeks he will sell one hundred chickens. Next to hens, the biggest seller is rabbits, both for cooking and as pets. He also sells homing pigeons to boys who want a messenger bird.

New Haven

New Haven's Italian colony around Wooster Square has been described as a neighborhood that wouldn't give up. Originally an Irish neighborhood, in its heyday it was an area of plush mansions. After the Civil War, industry began moving in and its lifestyle changed. Factories and tenements pushed in. Children of old families married and moved away. It gradually became a place for old people and by 1890, twenty houses were lived in by widows or aging spinsters. Increasingly, landlords from other areas turned houses into multiple dwellings which were overcrowded and neglected. Cheap storefronts grew and stucco peeled off the villas, front porches sagged and columns rotted.

Meanwhile, Italian immigrants arrived. Historians claim that some industries even sent a ship from New Haven to Naples to entice entire families to come to work. Italians in the New Haven area found employment at the Candee Rubber Co., which was the first factory to hire them. Shortly thereafter, J. B. Sargent Co. began to hire Italians. The owner of the Sargent

Co. was married to a woman of Italian descent. By 1921 three quarters of the workers at that company were Italian.

And as they arrived, Italians moved into a convenient location, Wooster Square, which by then was a tarnished gem of society. In 1890, the population there was five percent Italian; ten years later, twenty-four percent, and within a few decades ninety-eight percent of the inhabitants of Wooster Square were Italian.

> "The old white church in Wooster Square
> Where godly people met and prayed—
> Dear Souls. They worship Mary there,
> Italian mother, man and maid
> In gaudy southern scarfs arrayed.
> The horrid candles smoulder where
> the godly people met and prayed.
> Alas the fall of Wooster Square".[15]

Today, old Italians remember Wooster Square with nostalgia. By 1915, it was such a haven for Italians that they never had to leave the neighborhood because everything was there. There were Italian banks, drug stores, bakeries, clothing stores and macaroni factories. There were social societies named for patron saints in Italy. The air rang with music from a mandolin, or an aria from an old opera record. The aroma of roasting coffee filled the crowded streets. There were pushcarts loaded with homemade sausages and hot peppers or delicious pizza. Religious *festas* would mean days and nights of fun, fireworks, dancing, singing, concerts and a final procession to the Italian mission church, St. Michael's, with a statue of the patron saint being carried in the lead on the shoulders of men who belonged to that society. People pinned dollar bills to the statue's costume as it passed through the street. In July, 1974, such a *festa* in Wooster Square drew four thousand peopl and the celebrations went on for three nights.

As the early immigrants became more successful, they dreamed of better things for their children and many moved away. Those who remained tried their best, but by 1957 the neighborhood had degenerated into a slum, ready for destruction.

Then wonderful things happened. Children of Italians who had moved away, moved back to the old neighborhood. Professors and politicians and architects took a closer look at the houses. Everybody decided to work to rebuild the neighborhood together. Many Italians did not ask for federal funds but dipped into life savings to do their part. Even the Redevelopment Agency, sometimes accused of helping to break down the Square's spirit, can be credited with helping it.

Some old timers like the look of the new Wooster Square, but they are astonished at the new high class atmosphere and the high rents. New owners and tenants, mostly Italian, tend to be attorneys, architects, physicians and other professional people. Some houses once sold for $4,000 are now going for $75,000. The area reflects the change in ownership, for the hustle and bustle of the old "Little Italy" is gone.

One can trace the same stages in the life of other Connecticut Italian communities. As the Italian ethnic communities disintegrated or were totally moved by redevelopment, we see a movement to the suburbs. This movement brings up the question of the extent to which Italian social and cultural characteristics will be preserved in the more diluted ethnic context of the suburbs. Many Italian-Americans are sad at the loss of the urban "Little Italies". One woman from New Haven described at great length how her neighborhood around St. Anthony's Church had become run down as redevelopment moved in. She fell into a long period of depression and even had a nervous breakdown over it. Now recovered, she spoke about the terrible feelings of rootlessness she felt as a result of losing her neighborhood identity. Other Italian-Americans view the same changes very positively

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15. Lois Sabatino, "A Neighborhood That Wouldn't Give Up", *The Hartford Courant*, Magazine Section, Sept. 29,1974.

since they feel that urban communities had become dirty, rat-infested and unhealthy places to live. For them the suburbs represent a much better way of life in which they can still maintain their strong family ties and they do not feel any necessity to be surrounded by their own ethnic group.

IMMIGRANT DISTRIBUTION

In the early 1900's, virtually every state in the United States sought workers and in particular unskilled laborers. Workers were needed to construct new railroads and extend the lines of the old ones, to dig and enlarge canals, and to develop the water supply systems in cities and towns. Hands were sought to assist in the cutting of timber. Harvesters were needed to bring in the ice from the frozen north, as well as the fruits, vegetables and grains from the sunbaked fields throughout the nation.

By 1900 it was virtually impossible to find an English-speaking laborer doing common railroad work. The demand for such labor was met primarily by the immigrants from southern and eastern Europe. In spite of the vast number of arrivals, labor remained in short supply until the end of World War I.

Attempts to provide an effective means of distributing immigrants wherever needed throughout the United States came from all quarters. Those behind such efforts often had motives other than the desire to supply industrialists with laborers or farmers with agricultural workers. Many thought the key to solving pressing social and political problems lay in preventing the immigrants from congregating in large metropolitan areas. They believed that widespread immigrant distribution would help eliminate urban slums. It would help alleviate the suffering brought about by exploitation and free the immigrants from the clutches of the *padroni*, who were numerous in large cities. It also would remove a condition on which the politically corrupt could thrive and provide a setting more favorable for assimilation into American culture.

In the 1890's the Italian government operated an Italian Bureau at Ellis Island to help eradicate the *padrone* system and assist the Italian immigrant to find employment outside of New York City. Its operation, however, was suspended in 1899 because it was accused of failing in its objectives, seeking special privileges and interfering with the Commissioner of Immigration.

THE *PADRONE* SYSTEM

Italian labor throughout the United States was generally provided by the *padrone* system. The *padrone*, or employment agent, would agree with a contractor or railroad representative to furnish the required labor. He then contacted his banker or labor agency associate in New York or Philadelphia. The latter would collect, assemble and send the men to their destination. Sometimes the Italians came to the *padrone* unsolicited, sometimes he would canvass an area of the city where immigrants were out of work and procure them himself. On other occasions he would have to call his banking associates in Italy who kept in close touch with the subagents of steamship companies scattered throughout Italy. Having once established himself with a contractor or railroad, the *padrone* would usually remain with them. He then would enlarge his business and increase his profits on the commissary privilege granted him in the original contract. This was satisfactory to the employer who was assured of a labor supply and was relieved of the responsibility of hiring an interpreter. The control that a *padrone* exercised over an immigrant from the time he left Italy made for a very mobile labor force. The *padrone* could transfer his men from one job to another with ease to suit the requirements of the time. The *padrone* and the banker also could be one and the same.

The immigrant worker did not have to be afraid to travel in a foreign land or remain out of work for lack of money to go where there was activity. The *padrone* would make sure he was escorted to the work site and would maintain a close vigilance over him until the job was completed. For his troubles, he would get a free rebate on the transportation costs which he did not pass along to the immigrant, and most important, he would make a profit on the commissary privilege. Moreover, he did not stand to lose anything if he had to advance transportation costs since contractors protected the *padrone* against loss by keeping the men on the job until they had worked out their transportation. Sometimes transportation was provided on a line upon which the immigrant was working. At other times transportation costs would be remitted, depending on the amount of time an immigrant would stay on, as an inducement to get a needed worker to remain on the job. The fact that the *padrone* did not charge the railroad or contractor for his services attests to the profitable nature of the commissary business which made the Italian *padrone* system unique.

While other immigrants were willing to use the boarding trains of contractors and railroads, the Italians demanded their own kitchen. They did this for two reasons. They preferred to cook and eat food to suit their own tastes. At times they even baked their own bread. And probably more important, they could eat more cheaply this way. Italians willingly underfed themselves. With the money saved after buying food, beer, cigars and tobacco, the Italian still had enough surplus to send something to his family back in Italy. The non-Italian laborer willingly paid $18 a month for room and board which included three full meals a day. The menu for the non-Italian included ham and eggs, roast beef, vegetables, fish, oatmeal, bread, butter, pie and coffee. The Italians, however, could room and board for as little as $6.90 a month, for a savings of $11.10. He ate hardly one full meal a day. The menu for one such laborer consisted of bread, bologna, sausage, sardines, cheese, lard and coffee.

Immigrant railroad laborers paid $1 a month for housing. Railroads furnished ordinary boxcars with windows about eighteen inches square cut for ventilation. The cars had a stove in the center around which from ten to fourteen bunk beds were placed. Though the boxcars were furnished free, the *padrone* was allowed to charge his workers a monthly room rental, usually $1.

The Italians in this country who elected to put themselves under the care of a *padrone* could start from New York City, for example, with no money. They could go almost anywhere in the United States, even Alaska, where their labor was required. They could get food, clothing, lodging and luxury items such as beer or cigarettes on credit. When payday came, the *padrone* would present his bill to the contractor or railroad paymaster. The latter would deduct from the worker's wages what was due the *padrone* and give the balance to the worker. In some cases, the *padrone* drew the wages for his men and paid them after deducting what was due him.

Overall the *padroni* played a vital role in stimulating and directing the Italians to America. He was among the first to open their eyes to the tremendous opportunities awaiting them in the United States. He insured that once the Italians got here distribution would not be accomplished by chance. Many *padroni* sought to exploit and enslave their countrymen. These were the "flesh peddlers" who cared nothing for the poor Italian laborers and did them much injustice. As the years passed, Italians became more and more self-sufficient and less and less disposed to depend on the *padroni*. But they continued to settle those areas originally opened up by the *padroni*.

OCCUPATIONS

Though the Italians largely neglected agricultural occupations in America, there were some Italian agricultural communities. The northern Italian rural community of South Glastonbury, the classic example in Connecticut, developed after the efforts at part-time farming by railroad day laborers proved successful. Two of the highly successful Italians were John Carini and Luigi Piro, both of whom went into farming in the 1890's. Carini saved enough as a railroad worker to buy his own farm and subsequently built it into a fifteen hundred acre "estate" on which he raised peaches, apples, plums, pears, grapes and some small fruits and vegetables.

Piro went to work in 1896 for J. H. Hale, one of New England's largest fruit growers, and by 1908 became Hale's partner. These were only two of the many Italians who became farmers in the area. They were considered industrious and productive members of the community. The citizens of South Glastonbury did not have a high regard for Italians at first. Many thought them to be rude, lazy and dishonest. However, in time they came to assess these new immigrants differently. Hale said of them, "Italians are delightful people, and one of the best handlers of the soil for horticultural purposes, and are getting more out of it than any other class of foreigners that are coming to our shores. . . . In less than ten years five hundred acres which had always been too difficult to cultivate on account of rocks and stumps will be worth $250 an acre".[16]

Italians were not uniformly successful on the land in the early part of this century. They achieved no marked success in general farming or in raising staple crops like wheat, corn, rice, or oats. But on small acreage farms, where the entire family could be productive and where they could concentrate on one or two crops, like onions or lettuce, they did quite well. As farm laborers, Italians were criticized by American employers because they showed too little initiative and required too much supervision. But they seemed to be very satisfactory on truck farms, nursery farms, and on farms of canning companies. Where little machinery was used and most of the work was done by hand, they worked in gangs. Many farmers preferred them to Americans because the Italians worked more steadily and were more reliable and more easily handled than American farm hands.

Most Italian immigrants came to America to improve their economic status. In many cases, they depended on the *padrone*-banker-steamship agent to provide them with jobs, money and transportation inland. Even if they burned with a desire to plow, they had not the sufficient capital or knowledge of the country to immediately venture into agriculture for themselves. Clearly, the *padroni* provided facilities to serve industrial America.

It is difficult to determine the impact of the *padrone* system on agricultural America. The *padrone* certainly played a key role in supplying America's farmers with temporary labor, but their impact on permanent agriculture was less definite.

By distributing day laborers and seasonal workers the *padrone* was often the first to place Italians in an area in which they later turned to farming. Thus, many Italians worked in cities and eventually became part-time farmers in the surrounding countryside. If successful on the land, they soon bought their own land and turned to farming full time. More often than not, they became truck farmers providing urbanites with fruits and produce.

It is not too surprising that few Italians turned to farming when we remember that in Italy farming was synonymous with poverty and starvation. Also, the *padrone* was more interested in supplying labor to industrial America.

It is beyond the scope of this study to enumerate the trades, callings and occupations of Italians in the United States. But Connecticut does offer many conspicuous instances of the Italian success story in all fields of endeavor.

Banking has been one of the profitable businesses among Italians. The first Italian bankers

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16. Alice Bennett, "Italians as Farmers and Fruit Growers," *Outlook*, XC, September 1908, pp. 87, 88.

Entrance to Poli's Palace Theatre in New Haven

in Hartford were Pietro Antonio Laraia (LeRoy) and Sons. The Antonio Andretta and Palloti Bank became the largest Italian commercial bank in New England with its home office in Hartford. Other early Connecticut bankers were M. D'Esopo and Sons. These bankers provided an invaluable service to the community, providing liquid financial resources and combining the offices of real estate brokers, loan makers and steamship and transportation agents for the Italian immigrants.

An excellent example of the way in which Italians flourished in the banking business was described in a story that appeared in the *Hartford Times* and *Courant* in December, 1972. A group of three Hartford area investors had purchased a controlling interest in the First National Bank of Enfield from the estate of Antonio Gannuscio who died in 1970. Gannuscio, who came to Enfield from Italy at age twelve, worked as a waiter and then opened a shoe repair shop at age sixteen. Eventually, he headed three banks in northern Connecticut. He began his banking career in 1914 in Thompsonville as a private banker, starting the A. A. Gannuscio Bank which later changed its name to the First National Bank of Windsor Locks. Eventually, the entire operation became the Northern Connecticut Bank with headquarters in Windsor Locks. In 1955, Gannuscio founded the First National Bank of Hazardville. In 1970, its name was changed to the First National Bank of Enfield. At the time it was sold, this bank alone had assets of over $5,000,000.

Another example of Italian success in business from an earlier time was that of Sylvester Z. Poli, who started a small amusement house in New Haven in the early 1900's and had gone on to establish a chain of theaters of varying types in New Haven, Bridgeport, Meriden, Hartford, and some in Massachusetts and Pennsylvania.

In manufacturing, one can note the current example of the Coracci and Greca Brothers Dress Factories in Hartford. Greca Brothers is composed of four brothers, ranging in age from their early twenties to late thirties. Eduardo Greca is president of the quarter million dollar enterprise. He and his brothers came here from Floridia, Sicily, with their parents in the 1950's and are now holders of a considerable number of real estate properties besides working at the dress factory.

Connecticut has many Italian-American professional men and women. Hundreds of doctors, dentists, lawyers and professors can be found throughout the state. Moreover, a number of these persons are well known throughout the state and some even on a national level. The first Yale Italian graduates were P. Russo and G. Caporale who obtained Law Degrees in 1893. Other Yale graduates of the late 1800's were William Verdi, Professor G. F. Sagarino, Professor Antonio Marinoni and Professor Mario Spinello. Dr. Verdi was a noted surgeon and Yale University professor. He was born in Naples in 1872 and married the sister of Antonio Andretta, the banker. During World War I, he served with the American Expeditionary Forces as a Major in the Medical Corps and won the Distinguished Service Medal. Attorney Francis Pallotti of Hartford was born in Hartford and became an insurance agent in 1915, deputy sheriff in 1922 and an attorney in 1928. During the War he was a Second Lieutenant and served in Europe. He eventually became Captain. Nearly eighty now, he continues to report to work at his Main Street office in Hartford.

RELIGION

The earliest Italian Catholic priests in Connecticut were the Franciscans. They were the first religious order to send its priests to Connecticut. There may have been others, but it cannot be ascertained. One Italian priest who worked among the immigrants was Father D. Riviaccio who became the first pastor of the Italian parish of New Haven in 1887-88. He remained only a short time, because his congregation was not able to pay him a salary. He is said to have come from South America and may have been the same Rev. Louis Rivieccio who was vice-superior of the Diocesan Seminary of St. Thomas of Aquinas in San Francisco in 1859.

The work of the Franciscans extended from Winsted to Norfolk, Litchfield, Goshen, Torrington, Colebrook and New Boston. In 1862 Father Leo Rizzo of Saracena, Province di Cosenza, Italy, spent nine months at St. Mary's Church in New Haven. Father Leo was the leader of the Franciscans as well as the order's most distinguished member. He was born on August 15, 1833, and was educated at Franciscan schools in Cosenza and Rome and was ordained in 1856. Four years later he came to Pennsylvania and two years after that to New Haven at St. Mary's Church. He volunteered to replace Father Mullen as chaplain of the Ninth Regiment of Connecticut, an all Irish regiment. A man of earnest patriotism, Father Leo served during the Civil War until 1864, when he was forced to resign because of ill health. He was then given charge of St. Joseph's parish in Winsted. He served there from January, 1865, to the time of his death on November 3, 1897, with the exception of a three-year period when he was President of St. Bonaventure's College in Allegany, New York. From Winsted, Father Leo and his Franciscans brought the Catholic faith to the surrounding towns. They built the Church of Litchfield, a new church at Goshen, a new church and rectory in Torrington, and a mission in Colebrook. They also rebuilt and enlarged the Church of Norfolk. Father Leo's most important work was done in Winsted. We read in Boyd's *Annals and Family Records of Winchester, Connecticut,* published in 1873, that "Under his energetic supervision the parish was thoroughly organized, and additional lands were purchased, with buildings thereon for a parish school, and a residence for the Sisters of Third Order of St. Francis, by whom the school was organized, and has been successfully conducted. . . ."

Father Leo was a learned man and was deeply respected by all members of the community, regardless of their religious beliefs. He was called an American of the Americans. He kept the American flag flying from the cupola of his school house when there wasn't another United States flag in the town on any other school. Yet he never forgot the Italian people.

In 1896 the town of Winsted gave him a gold medal, in recognition of thirty-five years of "active service for the welfare of the commonwealth". The governor of Connecticut and other high officials were present at the ceremony. When he died a year later, he was given a military funeral, at which more than two hundred and fifty priests and four bishops were present. It is said that even now the parishioners of St. Joseph's gather around Father Leo's grave by the church to honor his memory. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that in the early part of the mass immigration (1880 to 1900), the Italian immigrant generally was rather apathetic towards his church and was far from generous in supporting it. The chief causes of this were: 1) he had little to be generous with; 2) he at first had been neglected by the American priests and sometimes even by his own priests; 3) he worked long hours; 4) he was pursued by Protestant proselytizers.

The second group of Italian priests who were very helpful to the Italian immigrants were the Scalabrini Order, founded in Piacenza, Italy, in 1887, for the care of the Italian immigrants. Bishop John Baptist Scalabrini, the founder, sent the first missionaries to the United States in 1888. They came to New York City and the Italians there were happy at their coming.

The Scalabrini Order was most active in New England. Their first church in Connecticut was St. Michael the Archangel in New Haven in 1889. It was not very long after that, that the missionary order could be found in the major cities and some small towns in the United States. Three congregations of Sisters also owe much of their present spirit and development to Bishop Scalabrini's leadership. The first of these to come in contact with him were Mother Cabrini, a nun, and her sisters. Like Bishop Scalabrini, she had also come from Italy. From her childhood she had longed to be a missionary. She had founded the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart for service in the Orient. Bishop Scalabrini, however, suggested that she go to America. He sought to persuade her to accept his suggestion. He told her of the poor Italian immigrants in the United States for whom a woman's hand and comforting words would mean a rebirth and a regeneration. It is said that it was Pope Leo himself who commanded Mother Cabrini to come to America, "not to the East, Cabrini, but to the West". The head of the Church of Rome had spoken and Mother Cabrini did not hesitate. She left Italy with her sisters in her group and settled in New York City. Mother Cabrini became the first North American Saint and her Order has given much help to the immigrant. Orphanages, hospitals and schools were founded. Their role in Connecticut private schools is discussed under "Education".

The Catholic faith was one of the most important aspects of the culture which the Italian immigrant brought to America. Earlier arrivals often felt uncomfortable in the existing churches that, for the most part, were staffed by Irish priests who did not know the language or religious customs of the Italian people. Gradually the Italian immigrants built their own churches, served by priests of their own nationality, where the Italian aspects of their Catholicism could be preserved. In many Italian-American neighborhoods traditional feasts were observed, where devotion to a patron saint was mixed with colorful street parades, entertainment and a holiday atmosphere.

In Connecticut, interviews with a number of Italians confirmed that, in their opinion, Italian Catholicism is still unique. In the largest Connecticut non-ethnic parish of St. Augustine's in Hartford, the priests there are careful not to provoke their Italian parishioners for fear of losing them, as the parish has changed from predominately Irish to predominately Italian in recent years. When the Irish pastor decided to renovate the santuary according to the modern liturgy of the Roman Catholic faith, part of that change meant eliminating the devotional candles and statues that Italo-Americans held dear to them. When the priest found out that some of the influential and wealthy Italians would leave the parish, he very quickly dropped the idea.

National consciousness, which developed among the Italians, Irish and Polish in America, strongly influenced ethnic attitudes toward religion. For Irish and Polish Catholics, religion made up a central aspect of national loyalty. For Italians, Catholicism and nationalism were opposing forces. Since the consummation of Italian unity in the homeland, patriotism has been a factor of the Italian character. The widespread opinion that the Vatican and the former Italian Crown were not altogether in harmony, had done a great deal to weaken the claim of the church on their allegiance. In fact, a considerable number felt that in Italy the church was unfriendly to liberty. The result was that few men attended church except on ceremonial occasions, the congregation on most occasions being made up in large part of women and children.

The Italians also received much criticism because of their proclivity toward festivals, processions and feasts which many thought to be perversions of religion. Yet the Italian viewed these celebrations as an integral part of church tradition. The Italian-American celebrated these functions not only in an effort to re-establish those religious customs which had strongly appealed to him in the homeland, but also to counteract Irish influences.

In recent years, some of these churches are seeing a new trend among Italians to return to the ethnic parish of their youth. Old festivals and processions are being revived and the churches are taking on a very definite Italian atmosphere.

In the years during and after the turn of the century, the church indeed began to provide effectively for the religious needs of Italian-Americans. The most significant manifestations of this new concern appeared in the establishment of a number of ethnic churches, served either by Italian or by Irish-Americans who spoke Italian and were for the most part educated in Italy. As a result of this, the Italian immigrant problem started to ease. Conversion of a sizable minority indicated that it had not been completely solved, but by 1900 the critical period had just about passed.

The great amount of residential mobility of the ethnic colony formed one major problem faced by the church in its efforts to win the loyalty of Italian newcomers. This constant movement made the formation and maintenance of a stable congregation difficult. An additional complication was the fact that many immigrants, at least in the earlier years, intended to stay only temporarily in the United States and they tended to regard themselves as members of an Italian village church rather than of the ethnic parish. Such immigrants saw no reason to contribute financially to it, since they expected to use its facilities only until they returned to Italy. In actuality, of course, they generally settled permanently in the city. In order to gain and hold the support of immigrants and their children, the church in the United States found it necessary to offer a variety of services and facilities that were partly or entirely of a nontheological nature. Among these new facilities were missions, clubs, lay societies and organizations, and Sunday Schools. These expanded functions formed part of a general movement in the American Catholic Church, during the period from the 1890's to World War I, to provide social services in order to keep Italian immigrants within the fold. When parish schools were built, the Sunday School method was discarded. For Italians in Connecticut, this replacement has transpired mostly since the 1930's and 1940's.

The Church intended ethnic churches to fulfill the religious needs of non-English speaking newcomers, and to that end, for the most part, they have been successful. But second-generation Italian-Americans, to some extent, who shunned Italian-language newspapers, societies and other community institutions and facilities as being undesirable also turned away from the ethnic parish in favor of American churches. At the same time they moved out of the colony and into neighborhoods earlier settled by "older" waves of Catholics, generally the Irish. The departure of second-generation and upwardly mobile newcomers from ethnic churches is seen in the decline of many downtown ethnic churches, such as St. Patrick-St. Anthony's of Hartford, Our Lady of Lourdes in Waterbury, and St. Anthony's in New Haven. But in recent years, some of these churches are seeing a new trend among the Italians to return to the ethnic parish of their youth. The old festivals and processions are being revived and the churches are taking on a very definite Italian atmosphere.

In America, Protestant evangelization had its start in the basement of an Irish Roman Catholic Church in 1872 by an Italian priest and his congregation who broke away from the church because they refused to accept the new doctrine of Papal Infallibility. They held services in the old Grace Chapel in Manhattan as the San Salvatore Protestant Episcopal Mission. By 1889, they were taken into the Diocese of New York and continued under the guidance of the Diocesan City Mission Society. In Connecticut, the first Episcopal Mission was that of St. Paul's on Grove Street in Hartford.

During the depression time of the late 1920's and 1930's, some Italians in dire need approached the Irish pastor of St. Anthony's Church in Hartford and were refused help. The priest's answer was that the church could use some help itself. Having been turned away, they then went for help to one of the Italian Protestant missions, where very quickly they were given aid. This recognition of the duty to serve the stranger was the strongest motive in the whole movement so far as the American Protestant churches were concerned.

The program of the Protestant churches in that era included the teaching of English, assistance in securing citizen's papers, mother's clubs and classes, many activities for the boys and girls, visitors and nurses who assisted in the homes and helped with problems, defenders in the courts. The churches also provided a meeting place for the benefit societies and lodges. These programs were particularly progressive and well adapted to the needs of the Italian immigrants. Naturally the message was along two main lines:) declarations against the theology and practices of the Roman Catholic Church and 2) the free presentation of the Gospel of Christ; it was not necessary to pay every time the services of the church were needed. Often, too, the preachers used the patriotic appeal, for the Roman Catholic Church had bitterly opposed the unification of Italy. Today, of course, the Church of Rome is a supporter of the State. No longer are poverty stricken Italians arriving in boatloads. The distinctly Italian Protestant church, for the most part, has been absorbed into the many churches of the various Protestant sects. Here and there, one may still find an occasional Italian Protestant church service in Connecticut.

The only threat of some consequence to the Catholic Church among the Italian immigrants in the United States came from Italian anticlericals, who campaigned against the papacy as a whole and Italian priests in particular through their press. This is why, at one time or another, we have seen in America Italian weeklies devoted to the defense of the Catholic Church, starting with the *Observatore Cattolico*, published in New York in 1875. Another one called *L'Armonia* appeared in 1890. Since then at least half a dozen more have come to life and died.

The Italian-American generally remained loyal to the Catholic Church. The existing prejudices between Protestant and Catholic in the United States was one of the chief reasons for the Protestant failure to attract a large number of Italian converts. One American clergyman, Philip Rose of Connecticut, who worked with Italians, advised those who wanted to labor with the new immigrants that "such is the dislike of the word Protestant with which Italian-Americans have been imbued, it is better to emphasize our name of 'evangelical churches' . . . ." [17] Some Protestant missions went as far as to adopt the name "American Catholic Church" or implement some of the traditional Italian Roman Catholic liturgy as would be the case of the Rev. Paolo Vasquez in the Italian Episcopal Mission of St. Paul's in Hartford.

FOLK BELIEFS

In addition to the extensive history we can document of Italian involvement with churches in Connecticut, it should be kept in mind that some Italians from the southern-most provinces, especially Calabria and Sicily, brought with them folk beliefs, the most prominent of which is belief in *il mal occhio* (the evil eye). In talking with a number of Italo-Americans in the state, our preliminary investigation reveals that northern Italians do not believe in *il mal occhio* and regard it as a purely southern Italian phenomenon. And some of the immigrants from the Mezzogiorno area also regard this belief as a mere superstition, not something one takes seriously. However, there were other immigrants from the southern provinces, both old and young, males and females, who either knew something about this belief, had had some experiences related to it or did in fact believe in it.

In Connecticut, we have discovered two schools of thought regarding *il mal occhio*. Further research is in process and will take some time to complete.

1) There appears to be a popular conception which is not too clearly defined and which contains contradictions about certain points concerning the evil eye. It is thought that a person can "put the evil eye" on others by disliking them intensely and wishing them evil. There is disagreement about the other way the evil eye can be placed upon a person. Some say that people can get the evil eye put on them just because they are very beautiful or handsome or well-dressed, and therefore someone stares at them with envy or jealousy. Pretty young children are thought to be particularly susceptible and mothers recoil with horror when someone gives their offspring a lavish compliment. Others say that this is not truly the evil eye.

Among common people, it is felt that the major symptom indicating the presence of *il mal occhio* is severe and persistent headaches which do not respond to any medication. When such headaches occur frequently at night, it is thought to be most serious, indicating that one is suffering from the particularly intense hatred of one or more persons.

When someone feels that *il mal occhio* has been placed upon him, there are rituals which can be performed to remove it. We were present at such a ritual in the spring of 1975, conducted by a very elderly immigrant lady living in the small Italian section of a suburban town in Connecticut. Unfortunately, she was not a talkative person and ignored any questions about the ritual, perhaps because of her own personality and/or perhaps because such knowledge is considered to be a little on the dangerous side. We did find out, however, that she was taught how to perform this ritual when she was a young woman by some older immigrants on Christmas Eve.

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17. Philip M. Rose, *The Italians in America*, New York: George Doran Co., 1922, p. 185.

First everyone had cocktails and pretzels. A special point was made that it was a good idea for the lady with the headaches to have an alcoholic drink.

The woman conducting the ritual crossed herself three times while saying something unintelligible to the rest of us. Then she made the sign of the cross three times on the water which she had poured into a soup bowl. She told the afflicted lady to look into the water. Dipping several fingers into a little pitcher of olive oil, she sprinkled drops of oil onto the water a few times and studied the surface of the water for a few seconds. She cut the water with a knife, making the sign of the cross three times. She told one of her relatives present to throw it away—to flush the water and olive oil down the toilet. Then she informed the lady with the headache that she had more than one evil eye and that she had had it for a long time.

She repeated the same procedure two more times. After the third time, she asked for big kitchen matches. She lit one and holding it in her hand, lit a second one from it and placed it floating on top of the water. She lit a third also from the first one and placed it parallel to the match already floating on the water. Then while the first match was still lit, she laid it across the other on the water where it burned for a brief period before going out.

When the ritual was over, the woman being treated offered money for the services. It was emphatically refused. The afflicted woman was then told that the entire procedure should be repeated two more times; each ritual should ideally be at least twenty-four hours apart. After the third performance, the evil eye would be removed and the lady should immediately begin wearing *il cornu* (the little horn amulets sold in drugstores and jewelry stores and Italian shops in the state). She particularly emphasized that *il cornu* must be readily visible when worn if it was to effectively ward off any future evil eye problems, and she recommended a gold colored *cornu*, or possibly a red one rather than a white one.

She left rather abruptly and the remaining relatives, her grandnephew and sister-in-law talked about spiritual matters. The grandnephew asked the sister-in-law to tell about some of her experiences since she knew little about the evil eye ritual itself. When she was a young person living in this same neighborhood, she had been assisting a doctor in the delivery of a baby at one of the neighbors' homes. When the child was born, it had two horns and a tail, and she said it wriggled around on the bed. It died soon after birth and she assured us that there was nothing to worry about.

2) The second conception of *il mal occhio* which we have found in Connecticut is that of an expert in these matters, called a *magia*. We interviewed a man who is a *magia*, an immigrant perhaps in his fifties or sixties who lives in an Italian urban area where he serves the needs of the immigrants who feel that they require his help.

He said that belief in the evil eye is common to Mediterranean countries like Italy, Greece and France. The true story of the beginning of this belief is that people noticed that individuals who had eyes of two different colors, just by looking at people, particularly young children or adults who were mentally weak, caused trouble for them. As a result of their gaze people would sicken and become very tired, develop heart trouble or headaches, etc.

As an example, the *magia* cited one of his grandfathers, a man with one brown eye and one blue eye. He caused problems for people just by staring at them even though he was a kindly man and intended no harm. Once when his grandfather was in New Britain, there was a man working in a soap factory who did not believe that he had the power. So his grandfather stared at him when he was stirring a vat of soap and the soap turned into oil, ruining the whole batch.

He claimed that a long time ago, priests in the Roman Catholic Church had special books which described how to go about fighting the Devil. People were not allowed to see these books because the clergy said that such knowledge was too dangerous to be dispersed at large. However, later these writings were made available to certain lay people who today are able to do much good with them while priests have little to do with these problems.

He went on to explain that certain people are born to be curers (determined by astrological criteria). Those born on Christmas Eve are the most powerful and need no books or instruction. He explained that even animals born at propitious times are superior in some respects. In his case, he was born at 11:20 p.m. on January 24th. We did not learn the significance of the day, but anyone born in January is supposed to be immune to the powers of the evil eye and to have special strength in combatting it for others. This may be due to the fact that in ancient times Janus was the god after which the month was named and he is represented as having two faces, one facing forward and one facing back. Thus, he can see all around himself.

People born at these special times have very strong and powerful spirits. They are able to cure dog bites and sickness by simply licking the tip of their finger and making the sign of the cross on people. There are also certain words to be said. He explained that his other grandfather was a curer and had taught him about it.

He also told a story of how he came to possess one of the books which describe how to deal with problems caused by the Devil. On June 29, 1928, he was living in a little town in Italy where he attended a feast. After all of the festivities ended, he was bicycling home with his friends at two o'clock in the morning. As they approached near the big statue of their *Madonna della Grazia*, his bicycle light went out and he heard a voice in back of him saying, "Do you want this book?" He and his friends stopped and he replied, "But I don't have any money." He could see no one in back of him but the voice continued, "Take the 12 *lira* from your pocket and borrow 8 *lira* from your friends." He didn't understand how anyone knew the exact amount in his pocket, but he did as the voice directed and a book was shoved inside his shirt. The light on his bicycle went on again and he felt a strange warmth enveloping his body. From that time on he knew there was something special about the book which he still has.

He said that he had a very strong and intelligent spirit which he used to help people with any spiritual problems, including *il mal occhio*. He could even help people who did not believe, but this was more difficult since he would have to fight their spirit as well as the problem. His spirit is close to God and so it is from God that he derives his strength. The *magia* then are special men or women who are God's mediums on earth to fight the power of the Devil here. The Devil's spirit is quite strong for he was a very powerful angel before he was driven out of Heaven.

Although we did not have the opportunity to talk about ritual, he did say that when he was performing rituals, a mark on his hand where the skin is a bit puckered would turn red. And he discussed amulets, dismissing *il cornu* as a stupid popular custom which does not protect anyone. Talismen which are effective are made from *pergamena*, or parchment fashioned from lambskin. The lambskin is soaked for twenty-one days in water and *calcina* (mineral lime) and taken out and stretched until very thin. The magia takes a compass to mark a circle on the *pergamena*, cuts it out and paints on it the person's last name and other things according to the problem.

There is still much research that needs to be done on the folk beliefs of Italians in Connecticut. At this point, we do know that belief in *il mal occhio* was brought here by some immigrants from southern provinces. These beliefs still exist and there are certain people who are informally as well as more formally designated with the powers to perform rituals to remove evil spiritual influences. There are specific amulets or talismen thought to protect one

Although there are Italo-Americans and non-Italians in the state who laugh at such beliefs and dismiss them as "superstitions", if we are going to try to understand Italian-Americans in the state of Connecticut, it is necessary not only to learn about their culture, but also to respect their beliefs.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS

Many immigrants sought to solve life's complexities by joining benefit groups. These were not, however, necessarily transplated institutions, carried by Italians to the United States. In the south of Italy, where strong family ties ensured aid in times of need, group life featured activities in a few social clubs, most of which had small memberships and limited community importance.

The mutual aid society, although known in Italy, existed almost exclusively among the middle class and especially among artisans in urban areas of northern and central Italy. By the 1890's, it had begun to appear in the south, but not in those particular regions from which most immigrants have come. The development of mutual aid societies among Italians in the United States differed from that in the homeland. In Italy, benefit groups closely intertwined with the growth of labor unions; societies were, in the words of labor economist Daniel L. Horowitz, "the linear predecessors of the trade unions in Italy." Societies in the United States, on the other hand, concentrated on insurance and social functions, helping newly arrived immigrants to deal with sickness, death, and loneliness rather than with labor organization.

Benefit societies appeared in the United States before the period of heavy immigration from southern and eastern Europe. By the middle of the nineteeth century, mutual aid methods became popular with working class Americans, native as well as foreign born. [illegible] provided strong competition for regular life insurance companies. Benefit societies in the United States apparently grew out of the English "friendly societies", which provided working class points of view, plus sickness, old-age and funeral benefits. But American societies developed a stronger social and fraternal character than the English societies. In a highly mobile country such as America, vast numbers of the native born as well as immigrants from Europe found themselves uprooted from familiar surroundings, people and life patterns. For them the lodge filled a great social void. Furthermore, the practice of passing the hat for unfortunate group members guaranteed aid in the event of need at minimum expense for all concerned, at least during the early years of the society when members were young and healthy and death seemed to be a problem of the distant future.

Immigrants and native Americans who joined mutual benefit organizations contributed small monthly sums to guarantee that the group would look after them when they were sick and provide a decent burial when they died. In addition, societies required all members to attend funeral services or pay a fine as penalty for nonattendance. In this way the organization assured each member of a proper burial and a well-attended service. The result of this was that sometimes the funerals tended to become social events. Over the years the burial service grew into an opportunity for old acquaintances to gather at irregular intervals and to reminisce about old days. Since young members predominated in the early years, most deaths resulted from accidents or disease, growing out of employment conditions. Societies also generally handled other related activities, especially the payment of sickness and accident expenses.

If we were to investigate and study the benefit societies of the Italians in Connecticut, we would find benefits for sickness and accident and death and funeral benefits which included flowers, pall bearers, a car, and mass cards.

There are over two hundred Italian American social organizations in Connecticut today. They include mutual aid societies, athletic clubs, fraternal organizations, religious, political and musical societies, recreational centers, and women's clubs.

The first Italian-American organization, called the *Fratellanza*, is said to have been founded in New Haven in 1884 by P. Russo, G. Mattei, Frank Mona and A. DiMatti. More groups grew up in the late 1800's. Many of these early organizations are still known to exist in Connecticut today.

Italian benefit groups generally had strong religious connections and many were linked directly with the parish church and sometimes church membership was a prerequisite to society membership. In the early years of settlement, societies formed typically on the basis of place of origin—either town or province of birth—and often the group named itself after the patron saint of the home village.

In spite of the profusion of organizations coming into existence and dying out very quickly, the general tendency was toward consolidation because the small size of the average group typically resulted in its early demise, as the societies often proved to be ignorant of basic insurance practices. Unsound investments and depositing of the societies' funds in private banks that went bankrupt also played a part in the disappearance of some of the organizations. Perhaps another reason for the disappearance of some societies was the absorption of mutual aid groups into fraternal organizations like the Order of Sons of Italy. Hartford Lodge No. 333 Order of Sons of Italy in America and Canada absorbed several Italian organizations originally founded in the 1890's and 1900's such as the Fratellanza Society and the San Vito Mutual Society. The members benefited from this change for they gained entrance into a larger and more stable organization. Thus, financial considerations might have speeded the process of consolidation of small mutual aid societies into larger units, generally fraternal insurance groups on a regional or national level.

Almost every society had its own doctor and own lawyer who belonged to the membership. Their duties consisted of looking after medical or legal interests of their fellow members.

Mutual aid groups were strictly voluntary and cooperative enterprises that could not be called "insurance companies". The method by which benefit societies met obligations usually was to assess members in order to raise the needed amount of money. When a death occurred, for example, the society might find its cash on hand unequal to the cost of the burial. Each member would then contribute a proportionate amount to cover funeral expenses. The same process applied for any shortage in meeting payments for sickness benefits or other group costs.

In order to attract and hold membership, fraternal and mutual aid groups expanded their services from the basic benefit functions to include social ones as well, among them provisions for recreation facilities and special annual events, such as picnics, dances and religious celebrations. Since members overwhelmingly favored social activities, societies gradually placed a heavy emphasis on such events. The Garibaldi Mutual Benefit Society in Middletown is a good example. One of its members explains, "All of the Garry's, as its members are called, pay two types of dues: fees for social events ($15) and fees for funerals ($20). The only and obvious requirement for membership is Italian ancestry. In fact, easily eighty-five to ninety per cent of the members are from Melilli, a Sicilian village which has given Middletown many of its sons and daughters. In return for their dues, the members enjoy the weekend festivities at the large and spacious home, and are entitled to $1000 and flowers for their funerals. But the society also takes care of its own, and the executive board can vote money to a family whose wage earner has been disabled. The cozy brick building on lower Washington Street on weekdays sits dark and silent. But on weekend evenings, it's alive with activity as members crowd into the home to have a few drinks and visit with each other. There is no rivalry between the Garry's and the other mutual benefit groups. Many Garry's are also members of the other groups and in the summer they all get together to play soccer". The Garry's also sponsor a February *Carnevale* celebration and a Columbus Day parade.

While mutual aid societies and fraternal groups add social activities to basic benefit functions, some organizations formed and existed to serve social or recreational needs only, such as the various soccer and athletic clubs.

Other societies originated with military, political, religious or anti-religious objectives. The military groups celebrated Italian national holidays, such as September 20, the day in 1870 when Rome became the capital of a united Italy. They also march proudly with other Americans on Memorial Day.

Many of the religious societies are sickness and death benefit societies. Under the auspices of these and other societies, they may hold occasional picnics in the summer and socials in the other seasons. Some of the Italian religious societies pertain only to the care and conduct of the church itself. Most of these organizations collect dues, send adequate floral tributes to the funeral home where the deceased may be laid out, and arrange for a monthly or anniversary mass in honor of the souls of the recently dead. Some also help the needy. Many function largely in a social way, especially the women's groups.

Religious Festivals

A religio-social event in which the community interest centers is the celebration of the feast days of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the many saints. Religious festivals held in Connecticut are usually held the first Sunday after the feast date. St. Joseph's Feast (*La Festa di San Giuseppe*) is in March. The Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary is held in the middle of August. These festivals usually are on the weekends for one to three days. Some may even last longer. They bring out the vivid color of the Italian peasant traditions, and unite the community in one great family. A preparation is made on the evening of the eve of the feast. An outdoor concert, usually by an Italian band hired for the occasion, plays selections from Verdi and Otto. American and Italian patriotic music may be played as well. The celebration begins with a High Mass on the morning of the Saint's Day or a proposed day. A number of little girls dress in white and scatter flowers before the head of the procession and in the church. A choir of boys and girls might follow singing. Then comes the float bearing the statue of the honored saint escorted by an honor guard or in some cases young men or women in picturesque costumes and little girls dressed in white, the priest in his robe, and the people in Sunday or holiday dress. Some brass bands, floats depicting sacred or historical episodes, and cars loaded with flowers follow the procession. Some of the organizations might march on foot displaying the American flag and Italian colors and their respective banners. The procession winds its way through streets of the Italian colony and is frequently stopped by patrons who desire to make offerings to the saint by pinning money on the statue itself. The procession usually ends back at the church or at festive grounds or a hall especially rented for the occasion. Many Italian-American organizations have their own halls for celebrations.

With the religious part of the festival over, the Italian-American community might settle itself for three days of feasting, athletic exhibitions, sports, dancing and other activities. A band concert might be held on the second evening. During the earlier years, a horse, calf, goat or some other animal was raffled in further honor of the saint. The group then assembles itself to witness a competitive display of games, like grease pole climbing, as can be seen at the Mt. Carmel Feast in Enfield. A cash prize is usually awarded to the firm making the best display or to persons winning the game contest. It is customary for the mayor of the city and a committee of five to be in charge of all the festivities. Other invited persons may act as judges.

Columbus Day and Carnivals are celebrated in much the same manner, but for the most part without the religious ceremonies, other than a special Mass. There is agitation among some Americans and so-called Italian-American intellectuals to end these beautiful and unique celebrations, because they belong too much to the old world. Fortunately in the 1970's some Italian-American celebrations continue to exist.

Outside the churches, there are other institutions in which many Italian-American fraternal, social, athletic and musical societies meet regularly, such as the Italian centers of Stamford and Bridgeport. They are often the best equipped places outside the general American community and public school system. They may have at least one swimming pool, a gym, library, museum, club rooms, banquet halls, a stage, tennis and bocce courts and kitchen facilities.

Italian-American Social Organizations in Connecticut

Ansonia

1) Saint Michael Mutual Aid Society, Inc. 1928
2) Central Subalpi Club, Inc. 1933
3) Congregazione Di San Sebastiano Club, Inc. 1939
4) Holy Rosary Catholic Men's Club, Inc. 1955
5) St. Michael's Athletic Club

Avon

1) Prince Thomas DeSavoy Society, Northern Italy, Inc. 1917

Berlin

1) Tripoli Italian Mutual Benefit Society, Inc. 1949

Branford

1) Italian American Social Club, Inc. 1948

Bridgeport

1) Subalpino Social Club and Mutual Benefit Society, Inc. 1910
2) Province of Caserta Benevolent Society, Inc. 1910
3) Province of Benevento and Limitorfe Society, Inc. 1912
4) Trinacria Mutual Aid Society, Inc. 1912
5) Savoy Athletic Association (formerly Savoy Mazzini Athletic Club), Inc. 1914
6) Castelfranco in Miscano Society Club, Inc. 1922
7) Mutual Benefit Society of the Marche Italy, Inc. 1924
8) Duke of Abbruzzi, Citizen of Muzellar Mutual Aid Assoc., Inc. 1926
9) Caserta-Napoli, Inc. 1928
10) Crescent Place Club, Inc. 1930
11) North Italian Ladies Aid Assoc., Inc. 1937
12) Trinacria Female Mutual Aid Society, Inc. 1934
13) Subalpino Ladies Aux., Inc. 1937
14) Women's Society of Abruzzo. Inc. 1937
15) Italian Alliance Clubs of North America, Inc. 1937
16) North End Columbus Assoc., Inc. 1940
17) Italian American Boys Club, Inc. 1941
18) Garibaldi Masonic Club, Inc. 1942
19) Ragusa Social Club, Inc. 1947
20) Italian American Community Center of Greater Bridgeport, Inc. 1950
21) Circolo Sportivo Italo Americano, Inc. 1967
22) Campania Sport Club, Inc. 1970
23) League of Saint Joseph's Manor Inc.

Bristol

1) Italian American Club, Inc. 1931
2) San Maurese Social Club, Inc. 1939

Chester

1) Italian American Mutual Aid Society, Inc. 1910

Cromwell

1) Italian American Club, Inc. 1949

Danbury

1) Lazio Society of Mutual Benefit, Inc. 1930
2) Vespucci Recreational Center, Inc. 1943

Darien

1) Piedmont Associates (changed from Italian Society of Mutual Benefit Humbert Prince of Piedmont), Inc. 1916

Derby

1) St. Michael's Arcangiolo Society, Inc. 1906
2) Columbus Club Assoc. of Derby, Inc. 1960

East Hartford

1) Society of Our Lady of Mount Carmel (includes men and women), Inc. 1926
2) Italian-American Club, Inc. 1937
3) Italian-American Ladies Club, Inc. 1957

Enfield

1) Mutual Society Saint Calogero of Naro Sicily, Italy, Inc. 1917
2) Societa Maria SS. del Monte Carmelo, Inc. 1926
3) Italian American Club of Thompsonville, Inc. 1961
4) Lodge No. 745 Order Sons of Italy in America and Canada (men and women)
5) Enrico Fermi Italian American Society, Inc. 1971

Farmington

1) Lenola Club, Lenola, Province di Latina, Lazio, Italy, Inc. 1930
2) Unico National, Farmington Chapter, Inc. 1970

Forestville

1) Italian Social Club, Inc. 1940

Greenwich

1) Citizen Mutuo Ben. Assoc. of Saint Rocco of Morra, Inc. 1910
2) Italian League St. Lorenzo Martyr Society, Inc. 1923
3) UNICO, Inc. 1960

Groton

1) Italian American Citizens Club, Inc. 1904

Hamden

1) St. Michael's Athletic Club, Inc. 1933
2) Italian American Independent Club, Inc. 1937
3) St. Francis Xavier Cabrini of Mutual Aid, Inc. 1948
4) Italian Old Age Home, Inc. 1949
5) Orphanage of Bedonia, Italy, Inc. 1963
6) Mendillo-Faugnio Post No. 5, Inc. 1949
7) Columbus Club, Inc. 1955

Hartford

1) Young Italian American Association, Inc. 1892
2) Hartford Lodge No. 333 Order Sons of Italy in America and Canada, consisting of several Italian organizations originally founded in the 1890's and 1900's
3) San Valentino Society, Palmoli, Prov. di Chieti, Abruzzi, Italy, Inc. 1918
4) Rumulae Bisaccia Mens Society, Bisaccia, Prov. di Avellino, Campania, Italy, Inc. 1919
5) Alpha Iota Phi (Italian Fraternity), Inc. 1920's
6) Provinciale Operaio di Siracusa Society, Prov. di Siracusa, Sicily, Italy, Inc. 1920's
7) Italian Mothers' Club, Inc. 1921
8) Sons of Palazzolo Acriede Society, Palazzolo Acriede, Prov. di Siracusa, Sicily, Italy, Inc. 1922
9) Floridian Mens Society, Floridia, Prov. di Siracusa, Sicily, Italy, Inc. 1922
10) Italian Teachers Club of Greater Hartford, (organized 1926)
11) Daughters of Queen Marguerite, Inc. 1927
12) Popoli Society, San Bonifacio Popoli, Prov. Pescara, Abruzzi, Italy, Inc. 1927
13) Societa Mutuo Santa Lucia, Siracusa, Prov. di Siracusa, Sicily, Italy, Inc. 1928

14) Protolana Mens Society, Maria SS Delle Libera, Protola, Prov. di L'Aquila, Abruzzi, Italy, organized 1929

15) Santo Leone Society Isaracena, Prov. di Cosenza, Calabria, Italy, Inc. 1930

16) Italian War Veterans of the United States, Monaco-Carlino-Strano Post No. 1, Inc. 1932

17) Italian-American Junior League of Greater Hartford, Inc. 1934

18) Luna Social Club, Northern Italy, Inc. 1935

19) Italian American University Club, Inc. 1935

20) Romulae Bisaccia Ladies Society, Bisaccia Prov. di Avellino, Campania, Italy, Inc. 1935

21) Madonna SS Delle Grazia Society, Sessa Aurunca, Prov. di Caserta, Campania, Italy, Inc. 1936

22) Floridian Ladies Society, Floridia, Prov. di Siracusa, Sicily, Italy, Inc. 1936

23) Daughters of Canicattini Bagni Society, Canicattini Bagni, Prov. di Siracusa, Sicily, Italy, Inc. 1936

24) Christopher Columbus Society, Inc. 1936

25) L'Aurora Milienniale Society, Protestant Italian Bible Students, Inc. 1939

26) Giuseppe Mazzini Society, Inc. 1939-40

27) Italian American Home Association of Hartford, Inc. 1940, reorganized 1960

28) Ladies Good Will Club, Inc. 1940

29) Mormannese Ladies Society, Mormanno, Prov. di Cosenza, Calabria, Italy, Inc. 1942

30) Trinacria Club, three provinces of Sicily, Italy, Inc. 1943

31) Hartford Chapter of UNICO Nat'l, Inc. 1947

32) St. Anthony Ladies Society, Inc. 1949

33) Young Italian American Ladies Aux., Inc. 1949

34) Hartford Chapter of Boys Town of Italy, Inc. 1952

35) Italian American Stars A.C., Inc. 1953

36) Columbus Day Celebration Committee, Inc. 1955

37) St. Patrick-St. Anthony's Ladies Guild, Inc. 1958

38) St. Patrick-St. Anthony's Mens Club, Inc. 1958

39) Italian American Democrats of Hartford, Inc. 1959

40) Santa Cristina Society, Sepino, Prov. di Campobasso, Abruzzi, Italy, Inc. 1960

41) Italian Progressive Society

42) S.O.I. Inc. 1971

43) Caffe' Dello Sport Athletic Club, Inc. 1973

44) St. Crescenzo Celebration Committee, Pacentro, Prov. di Aquila, Abruzzi, Italy, organized 1973

45) Italian Information Center (Centro Italiano Informazione), Inc. 1973

46) Italian American Home Credit Union, Inc. 1974

47) The Italian-American Historical Society of Greater Hartford, Inc. 1974

Kensington

1) Italian Political Independent Club, Inc. 1912

Manchester

1) Fubinese Club (men), Fubine Monterrato, Prov. di Alessandria, Piemonte, Italy, Inc. 1920's

2) Regina d'Italia Mutual Benefit Society (women), Inc. 1931

3) Societa Maglianese-Sabino Society (men) Magliano Sabino, Prov. di Rieti, Lazio, Italy, Inc. 1940

4) Societa Femminile Alpina (women) Northern Italy, Inc. 1936

5) Italian-American Society (men), Inc. 1950

6) UNICO Nat'l – Manchester Chapter, Inc. 1960's

Meriden

1) Italian Protection Society No. 2, Inc. 1904

2) Italian Republican Club, Inc. 1915

3) Italian Society of Duchessa d'Aosta, Inc. 1909

4) North Italian Home Club, Inc. 1930

5) Lorenzo Amico Post, Inc. 1937

6) Columbus Park Bocci Club, Inc. 1940
7) Sportsmen's Athletic Club, Inc. 1955

Middletown

1) Sons of Italy Mutual Aid Society, Inc. 1918
2) Giuseppe Garibaldi Mutual Benefit Society (changed from Giuseppe Garibaldi Mortuary & Sick Benefit Corp.), Inc. 1930
3) Italian American Civic Order

Naugatuck

1) Societa Di Mutuo Soccorso Cristoforo Colombo

New Britain

1) Vittorio Emmanuele III, and Star of Italy Mutual Benefit Society, Inc. 1908, (changed to The United Italy Mutual Benefit Society, Inc. 1926)
2) Duke of Abbruzzi, Citizen of Muzellar Mutual Aid Assoc. (changed to Duke of Abbruzzi and Holy Crucifix Citizens of Mussellaro Mutual Aid Assoc.)
3) Generale Ameglio Death Benefit Soc., Inc. 1967 (changed from General Ameglio Mutual Benefit Society, Inc. 1973)
4) Marchagian Society, Inc. 1920
5) Marconia Social Club (changed to the Marconi Society and Garden Park Athletic Club), Inc. 1945
6) Angelo Custode Priolesi Club, Inc. 1925
7) Italian Fraternal Society, Inc. 1926
8) Marchegian Hunters Club, Inc. 1937
9) Campodipietra Mutual Benefit Society, Inc. 1932
10) Saint Sophie Sortinese Female Society, Inc. 1937
11) Club Forty Eight AC, Inc. 1946
12) Nicola Bernardino Post No. 2, Inc. 1946
13) Clover Club, Inc. 1955
14) Italia Sports Club
15) Italian American Mutual Benefit Assoc.
16) New Britain Chapter UNICO National, Inc. 1970

New Canaan

1) Columbus Center of New Canaan Inc.

New Haven

1) Societa Saint Andrea Apostolo di Mutuo Soccorso, Inc. 1905 (changed to Societa Saint Andrea Apostolo, Inc. 1960)
2) Societa St. Maria Maddalena di Mutuo Soccorso Atranse, Inc. 1905
3) Campania Club, Inc. 1915
4) Conn. Grand Lodge of the Order of the Sons of Italy in America, Inc. 1916
5) San Guiliano Club, Inc. 1914
6) Society Regional Marchegiana of Mutual Aid, Inc. 1925 (merged with Society Feminine Marchegiana, Inc. 1936)
7) Circle Pietro Badoglio, Inc. 1936
8) Verdi Sport Club, Inc. 1943 (changed to William F. Verdi Sport Club, Inc. 1949)
9) Circolo Umberto II di Savoia, Inc. 1946
10) Italian American Democrats of Conn., Inc. 1949
11) Village Sportsmen's Club, Inc. 1955
12) Dominic Aitro Bronco Little League, Inc. 1958
13) Dante Club, Inc. 1973
14) Club Savoy (changed from Club La Petole, Inc. 1971)
15) New Haven Tercentenary, Inc. 1970
16) Piccola Italia Club, Inc. 1972

Newington

1) UNICO National, Newington Chapter, Inc. 1973

New London

1) Italian Society for the Mutual Aid of Men and Women, Inc. 1922
2) Italian Dramatic Club, Inc. 1922
3) Italian American Women's Progressive Club, Inc. 1948
4) Italian American Civic Assoc., Inc. 1949
5) Italian Sisterhood Society, Inc. 1949
6) Italian American Women's Club, Inc. 1955
7) Sons of Italy in America and Canada

Tuscana-Columbus Lodge No. 464, Inc. 1958 (changed to Sons of Italy in America and Canada, Inc. 1961)

Norwalk

1) Saint Mary Morgia Castelnuovo Dauno Prov. of Foggia, Italy, Inc. 1926
2) Columbus Republican Club, Inc. 1927
3) Italian American Athletic Club, Inc. 1932
4) Societa Castelnovese Luigi Zuppetta di Mutuo Soccorso, Inc. 1938
5) Mount Carmel Club, Inc. 1941
6) Dante Alighieri Cultural Center Assoc., Inc. 1964
7) Sportsmen Club, Inc. 1971
8) Pietro Micca North Italian League, Inc. 1960
9) Moscariello Cifatte Post No. 6 Italian American War Veterans

Norwich

1) United Italian American Mutual Benefit Society, Inc. 1946 (changed from United Italian Benefit Society, Inc. 1920)
2) Italian American Veterans Assoc., Inc. 1949
3) San Donato Society, Inc. 1957

Plainville

1) Italian Women's Civic Club, Inc. 1949

Putnam

1) Italian-American Society, Inc. 1937

Ridgefield

1) Italian American Mutual Aid Soc. (formerly Italian-American Citizens Political and Mutual Aid Society, Inc. 1916; then Italian-American Citizens Political Club, Inc. 1926)
2) Italian American Ladies Mutual Aid Soc.

Rockville

1) Italian Social Club, Inc. 1937

Southington

1) Sons of Italy Club, Inc. 1918
2) UNICO
3) Society Maria SS. Degli Angeli, Inc. 1960

Stamford

1) Aviglianese Aid Society, Inc. 1905
2) Settefratese Mutual Benefit Society, Inc. 1916
3) Gravina Di Puglia Mutual Aid Society, Inc. 1921 (association of former residents of Gravina, Prov. di Puglia)
4) Italian Center, Inc. 1933 (formerly Italian Institute, Inc. 1931)
5) First Stamford Italian American Republican Club (Richmond Park Republican Club, changed from Third Ward Italian American Republican Political Club, Inc. 1933)
6) Minturnese Social Club, Inc. 1939
7) The Society of Saint Vito Martire and Maria S.S. Del Carmine, Inc. 1935
8) San Manghese Club, Inc. 1950
9) Midtown Independent Club (formerly the Waterside Democratic Club, Inc. 1954)
10) Italian Center Men's Club, Inc. 1961
11) Club 14, Inc. 1964
12) Clubmen Social Club, Inc. 1967
13) Italian Soccer Club, Inc. 1969
14) Alianza Inter-Americana
15) American Italian Assoc. Inc. 1971
16) Columbus Gardens, Inc. 1971
17) Lega Arena Dasa Inc.
18) Jerry Metallo Ring No. 97 International Brotherhood of Magicians, Inc. 1955

Stafford Springs

1) Italian Hall (changed from Societa di Mutuo Soccorso Italo Tirolese and Italian Sick Benefit Society, Inc. 1919
2) Italian Benefit Society, Inc. 1921

Stratford

1) Italian Sick Benefit Society
2) Mount Carmel Society

Thomaston

1) Italian American Political Club, Inc. 1931

Tolland

1) Italian-American Friendship Club, Inc. 1935

Torrington

1) Piemontese Society, Inc. 1939
2) Veneta Mutual Benefit Society, Inc. 1944
3) The Italian American Society (formerly Societal Operaia Italiana di Mutuo Succorso, which merged with the Dante Alighieri Society, Inc. 1902
4) Italian American Republican Club (changed from Italian Republican Club, Inc. 1949)
5) Italian American Democratic Club, Inc. 1960
6) UNICO, Inc. 1967
7) St. Peter's Drum Corps. Inc. 1972

Trumbull

1) Italian Community Club, Inc. 1958

Wallingford

1) Libero Pensiero Mutual Aid Society, Inc. 1932
2) Italian Women's Society Mutual Aid (Libero Pensiero), Inc. 1943

Waterbury

1) Aviglianese Aid Society, Inc. 1903
2) Frigentina Society, Inc. 1913
3) Society of Mutual Succour Montagnese, Inc. 1917
4) UNICO, Inc. 1930
5) Madonna Dell'Assunta Society, Inc. 1934
6) Social Circle of the North Italian Club, Inc. 1938
7) American Italian Civic Club, Inc. 1939
8) North Square Athletic Club, Inc. 1941
9) Marconese Brotherhood, Inc. 1941
10) Aviglianese Athletic Club, Inc. 1941
11) Italian Gospel Hall, Inc. 1944
12) The Corrado Social Club, Inc. 1948
13) Italian American Democratic Club
14) Romagnolo Recreation Club, Inc. 1962
15) Saint Lucy Housing Corp., Inc. 1970
16) St. Vincent's Mutual Society, Inc. 1963
17) Pontelandollo Community, Inc. 1966
18) Oratorio Club, Inc. 1968
19) Ponte Social Club, Inc. 1970
20) Columbus Club, Inc. 1960

Oakville (Watertown)

1) First Oakville Italian Aid Society (Prime Societa Italiana in Oakville)
2) Marconese Brotherhood

West Haven

1) Italian Settentrionale Society of Mutual Aid, Inc. 1928
2) Our Lady of Carmel, Inc. 1926
3) The Pietro Micca North Italian League, Inc. 1936
4) Alife Society of America, Inc. 1947
5) Marchegian Sportsmen's Club (changed from Marchegian Gun Club, Inc. 1956)
6) Italian American Civic Assoc., Inc. 1958
7) Via Nova Italian American Club, Inc. 1966

Westport

1) St. Anthony Society of Saugatuck (Westport), Inc. 1941

Willimantic

1) Lodge No. 267 Order Sons of Italy in America and Canada (men)
2) Lodge No. 1526 Order Sons of Italy in America and Canada (women)

Wilton

1) Italian Greyhound Club of America

Windsor

1) Italian American Ladies Club, Inc. 1962

Windsor Locks

1) Italian American Club, Inc. 1903
2) Italian Progressive Club, Inc. 1931
3) Saint Oronzo Society (Joint Stock Corp.)

Winsted

1) Young Men's Giuseppe Garibaldi Mutual Aid Society, Inc. 1910
2) Young American Women's Club, Inc. 1957

Woodbridge

1) Santa Maria Assunta Society, Inc. 1949

ART

There have of course been many, many Italian and Italo-American artists who have added immeasurably to the quality of life in the State of Connecticut, and whose work has been recognized and appreciated throughout the country and, in some cases, even abroad. It is beyond the scope of this study to attempt at this time to deal with any number of them. What we have done instead was to concentrate upon three outstanding artists.

Vincent Latella

A quick look at a summary of Vincent Latella's life and works is enough for one to appreciate what he means in the field of art of the late 1900's. Few artists can compete with his fortunate beginning and his great number of paintings.

Vincent Latella was born in Bagnara, Calabria, Italy, the 25th of March, 1929, and from the time he was a young man, he showed artistic tendencies. In 1950 he enrolled at the Academy of Rome and took courses in design and painting, where he received a diploma with high honors. In 1953 he left his native city of Bagnara and moved to Turin, a major city of northern Italy. In Turin he became a pupil of Professor Mario Micheletti, a painter of international renown. In 1954 he took part in the art exposition for painters known as the "Promotion of Beautiful Arts of Turin". In October, 1954, he obtained consent to participate in the Regional Exhibit of Piemonte. Still in Turin in 1955, he participated in the decoration of Saint Rita's Church. In 1959 he was involved in a series of frescoes in Ceraseto's Sanctuary in Monferrato. In 1960 he participated in the International Showing of Idronero. His talent allowed him to reach (in 1961) his greatest achievement: The Exhibit at the Caurrina Hall in Turin. In 1962 he won a prize for *"Mostra Pittorica Nazionale di Carrara"*. He received many commissions and at the same time he participated in the national art show *"La Parete d'Oro"* in Milan. One of his paintings, *"Il Pianino Ambulante"* obtained a flattering success. In 1963 he started working on a series of frescoes in a number of different churches. In St. John's Church of Noli, his painting of the Dome, in 1964, brings back the lost world of classic antiquity romantically recreated in his classical pictorial creations.

In 1964 Latella participated in the art show of the *"Mezzo Agosto Bagnarese"*. Soon afterwards he received the artistic Diploma *"Honoris Cause"*. In 1965 *"La Pro Loco"* of Bagnara opened (to the public) with a personal art show by Latella. Meanwhile the artist was working on a fresco of the Dome of the St. Carmelo in Ceramita Church, also in Bagnara. In the Church of SS. M. Annunziata of Pellegrino, he did a fresco in the little dome of the Baptistry which truly recaptures the Baptism of Jesus.

On July 29, 1966, Latella came to America. His first commission was in Darien, Connecticut, where Mr. John DeNunzio engaged him to paint a ceiling. The second commission came from Perillo's social hall and restaurant in Norwalk. Here the artist dedicated himself to a series of sights and subjects related to mythology. More commissions were granted him, and next was Villa Boeti in Chappaqua, N.Y. He has also decorated the walls of Artom Manor in Norwalk. "Il Matrimonio", "Paesaggio di Fantasia", "Il Giudizio di Paride" are works that will have great importance to artistic formations of the future.

In 1975 Mr. Latella is still living in Norwalk where he owns and operates a house painting business to support himself and his family, while he continues to receive commissions for his art. Just recently he was asked to work on the interior redecoration and renovation of the Norwalk Mansion.

According to Mr. Latella, even in Italy there are very few artists left today who have the talent and skills necessary for the painting of frescoes and cathedral ceilings. One might surmise that he is *the* only, or perhaps there may be one or two other such artists in the state of Connecticut. He is a man devoted to his art, happiest when he has the opportunity to use his unique talents and superior training. In the short span of nine years in Connecticut, he has already given more to this state than many others do in a whole lifetime.

Joseph Gionfriddo

Among the many Italian-American artists who have contributed their talents to the beautification of life in Connecticut is Joseph Gionfriddo. He was born in the early 1900's in Canicattini-Bagni, a little town near Syracuse in Sicily. When he was seven his father, mother, older brother and sister came to seek their fortune in the United States and settled in with relatives on Front Street in Hartford, Connecticut. Joseph and his brother were left with grandparents in Canicattini-Bagni to finish elementary school and learn some trades while their parents saved up enough money to send for them.

Joseph and his brother attended the elementary school in town which was taught by local teachers with occasional assistance from a priest. Even at this early age Joseph showed a remarkable talent. There was a young man in town who was fond of making sketches which he displayed in the windows of his house. Joseph would make a special point of passing by this house every day to see the pictures which inspired him to make some sketches of his own which he then put up in his grandparents' windows. Passersby and his relatives were impressed with his abilities and encouraged him to develop his talents.

Joseph remembers well his early days in Canicattini-Bagni and recalls with humor some of the similarities between life there and life on Front Street when he joined his parents at the age of thirteen. The Italians' love for playing the lottery, which gave them a chance to become rich for only a few cents, was evident in both places even among those who were very religious. In Sicily there were two nuns and three priests in Joseph's family. One of the nuns, an aunt, always played the numbers game. The drawing was held at quite a distance away in Florida so she would give her ticket to a vendor who travelled there. One day her number appeared in the newspaper as a winner and she was so happy! When the vendor returned he still had her ticket in his pocket—he did not even know that she had won and so she lost the cash prize. She was so very upset that she cried! But Joseph added that she was living at home with her family who gave her a pension so she really didn't need the money.

When Joseph and his brother joined their parents in Hartford, they had both completed elementary school and in addition had learned several trades by acting informally as apprentices to skilled practitioners in the town. In this way the family felt that if it was necessary they were ready to earn a living as blacksmiths, carpenters, shoemakers or barbers.

Joseph's dream when coming to the United States was to be able to earn enough money to buy a bicycle, which was considered to be the height of luxury in Canicattini-Bagni. Within a short time after his arrival he settled in quite happily to life on Front Street, a community in itself. He remembers the good times they had during the summer months when musicians who played various instruments (guitar, accordian, mandolin) would gather on the sidewalk and in the street for an impromptu concert and party.

His parents' industry provided enough money so that they could afford to let him attend the Brown School for three years. He soon established a reputation for his superior talent in creative art. He began his schooling in Room 19 where all the foreigners were assigned so that they could concentrate upon learning English.

As they progressed, they would move on to other rooms. The art teacher used to teach them to draw, using a ruler and making box-shaped objects. Joseph did very poorly at this and felt frustrated because he wanted to create. And so the teacher took him aside and let him sketch away by himself in the teachers' room while the others drew their boxes. He caused quite a sensation when he made a beautiful likeness of Mr. Ames, the superintendent. And when the famous singer, Enrico Caruso, died, Joseph made a drawing of him from a newspaper picture he saw of Caruso on his balcony in Naples. His work was so good that it was brought to the attention of the *Hartford Times* which printed it along with an article complimenting the budding young artist. Joseph also was of great help to his teachers with various art projects and displays in the school.

Joseph's mother was fond of praising his oldest brother because he was earning money which of course he gave to her as his contribution to his family. Joseph was determined that he, too, would be deserving of such praise and he worked at various odd jobs after school. On his first after-school job he made $16 a week. When he received his pay, he asked his boss to give it to him in one-dollar bills. When he got home he threw the money up in the air, much to his mother's delight. She said that she was a rich woman now and gave Joseph a quarter for himself.

After Joseph finished at the Brown School, he went to work as a barber. He had one problem. Being rather short, he could not attend to the tops of his customers' heads since the barber chairs in America were so high. (In Italy the chairs had been much lower). He resolved his dilemma by standing on top of a box while he worked. One day a rather inebriated man came in (it was during prohibition when the men would get drunk on "Jamaican ginger"). Joseph cut his hair and began to shave him with his brand new set of razors which his father had given him. The man kept slouching down in the chair and Joseph wondered why. Finally he asked one of his fellow barbers who looked the situation over and saw that Joseph's razors were so sharp he was actually skinning the man alive but drawing no blood!

Joseph heard that there were evening classes in painting for adults at Hartford High School. He had the good fortune to join the class of James McManus, one of Connecticut's leading artists. After studying for three years, Joseph was asked by McManus to join the Connecticut Art League. This was a group which included some of the socially prominent citizens of Hartford. Joseph remembers them as big men with beards and he felt very proud to be included when he was still quite young. McManus conducted some evening classes at their meeting place on the corner of Main and Grove Streets. Each member had his own key so he could paint during the day if he liked, or just socialize.

Through his wider associations with artists, Joseph met Guy Wiggins, another famous Connecticut artist, and won a scholarship to his art colony in Lyme. The scholarship extended to several years. Then Joseph submitted some of his work in a national contest for a Tiffany scholarship which he won. He spent two months living and working on the Tiffany estate in the company of fifteen other young artists. They each had their own studio plus free lodging and food. Every weekend a famous artist would be invited to review their week's work and offer advice. During this period Joseph was particularly happy to have the opportunity to study the extensive collection of Chinese and Japanese art in Tiffany's home. One entire floor was devoted to each country.

Joseph next looked for some way to make a living as an artist and found a job as a commercial artist, scaling pictures for newspapers and school diplomas. But he found this type of art too restricting and lacking in creativity. So his older brother sent him to New York to a hairdressing school and he joined his middle brother in the hairdressing business. Eventually he owned his own salon and had seven people working for him. He met and subsequently married a lady who was also a hairdresser.

Supporting himself well in this fashion, Joseph devoted all his free time to art, exploring the various media–oils, pastels and water colors. He did quite a bit of painting of scenes he found in rural Hebron. Here he located a thirteen-acre piece of beautiful woodland which he bought. Aided by his relatives, he put up a summer home and later their work-picnics produced a pond, fed by the winding brook which bubbles by within sight of his house. Unfortunately, Joseph was stricken by a severe case of arthritis which put him flat on his back in bed for two years. One doctor finally prescribed a medicine which helped him to get up and around, and he immediately set to work building his dream studio next to their summer home. The building is an all-year-round home containing a studio room with natural lighting and a seventeen-foot ceiling.

Joseph's first wife died in the 1960's, and after being a widower for three years, he remarried. He and his second wife returned to Italy for a visit with his relatives in Canicattini-Bagni who feasted and celebrated his return with such gusto that they were unable to leave for nine days. Even then everyone was so disappointed to see them go that they could barely make their escape.

Today Joseph and his wife raise and preserve all the vegetables they use on their property in Hebron. He continues his fine paintings and conducts classes for advanced students. He is well known throughout the state, and his paintings are in many a private collection. He has exhibited numerous times with very favorable reviews, even in Washington, D.C., and he is quite active in promoting art events in the state.

This very brief sketch of his life perhaps affords us a little insight into the process by which a young boy from Sicily became an Italian-American artist in Connecticut. His drive to be creative was nurtured by his Italian culture in which there is great respect for artists. His immigrant parents encouraged him, while urging him to also find a trade at which he could earn a living. The American culture around him has recognized his talent and rewarded him for it–and justly so, for his landscapes bring out the peace and dynamism of nature and his portraits capture the spirit as well as the physical likeness of his subjects.

Paolo Abbate

When one looks for examples of Italian or Italo-American artists in Connecticut, the name of Paolo Abbate quickly comes to the forefront. He is, very possibly, the greatest Italian sculptor to have ever lived in this state. He was a humanist in the classical sense. In the words of one of his admirers, Dr. Isabel Piopi of Torrington, he was a "Renaissance man".

Paolo Abbate was born at Villa Rosa on the island of Sicily in April, 1884. He was the son of Marchese Salvatore Abbate and Baroness Michela Alongi Abbate, descendents of an old Roman family which settled on the island. His father was an *Improvisatore,* gifted in poetry and the arts but because he owned land, he devoted his life to the broad field of the agricultural arts. He gave encouragement to his son who showed early interest in poetry, music, painting and sculpture. Paolo was educated in Rome and in Florence where he studied under the Sicilian sculptor Domenico Trenacoste, director of the Academy of Florence.

Coming to America in 1902, he soon became a citizen. He gave much time and thought to work among the immigrants in his adopted country. He attended the American International College in Springfield, Mass., where he studied literature, law and theology. He served as minister of the Italian Congregational Church in Pittsfield, Mass., from 1909 to 1918. The Reverend S. P. Cook, an eminent Christian scholar and pastor with whom Mr. Abbate collaborated for about ten years, said of him: "Signor Abbate is of a high, heroic type of manhood, possessed of a magnetism of spirit that gives him an irresistible power as a preacher . . . he is a man both inspired and inspiring".

Mr. Abbate made New York his home from 1918 to 1927. There in his studio, which was well-called "a Broadway Shrine", he gave counsel and new courage to those who sought his personal comfort and spiritual inspiration. He produced many lovely and significant pieces of sculpture and in 1924-25 was the minister of the Church of the Redeemer in Brooklyn.

Mr. Abbate was a lecturer on the Board of Education, New York City, a member of the Board of Directors of the *Universita Popolare*, president of the International Fine Arts League, president of the International Club of New York, member of the International Dante Society, president of the Artists Council, Inc., and member of the National Sculpture Society. He wrote thirty books in both Italian and English. He was awarded doctoral degrees from four institutions, including the University of Perugia, Italy.

Notable among his works is the Monument of Dante, the first one erected in this country which is in Downing Park, Newburgh, New York. One of his busts of Dante is at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. It was given by the Italians of that city and was officially presented to the University by General Diaz. Another Dante bust is in the Silas Bronson Library, Waterbury. Mr. Abbate sculpted the beautiful *War Memorial* which stands in Fiume, Italy, and the *Defender of Human Rights*, done for the Sesquicentennial in Philadelphia in 1926 for which he won a $1,000 prize.

Mr. Abbate executed a number of portrait busts, among them the following: President Harding; Louis Bourgeois, sculptor and architect; Richard Enright, Commissioner of Police in New York; Hortense Husserl, pianist; Caruso; Jesusa Alfau; Judge John J. Freschi; Professor David Varon, architect; Miguel Nicastro, violinist; Dr. Jessie Soars Carnovale; Dr. Lawrence Hall-Quest, educator; and Rev. Dr. John W. Niven, English divine and lecturer.

Other works in sculpture which have brought much praise from critics are: *The Prodigal Daughter; Puritas; The Lost Empire; Jeanne d'Arc; David; St. Peter; The Infant Pan; St. Francis of Assisi; The Divine Carpenter; Columbus; Law, Prophecy and Love; The Sorrow of the World; The Spirit of America;* and a memorial to Joyce Kilmer, the American poet who fell in World War I.

Mr. Abbate once told a reporter that his favorite statue was the piece entitled, *The Prodigal Daughter*. It was a sculpture of two nude women, one reclining and one embracing the legs of the other. Mr. Abbate said that it was inspired by the Biblical story of the Prodigal Son, and was meant to be a "glorification of womanhood", showing "the daughter clinging to her mother as to the Rock of Ages".

Mr. Abbate's attitude toward his work was expressed in one of his sayings: "The great mission in life is to make spirit, mind, and matter harmonize that life and art become one, and the creative joy of the artist proves a real ministry of world purification".

Paolo Abbate lived on a magnificent hill in Torrington, Connecticut, from 1927 until his death on April 30, 1973. Here Mr. Abbate continued his service to mankind—sculpting, lecturing and helping others. For decades he taught art students throughout New England who had come to study his methods and philosophy of art. He lectured on art at many colleges and universities throughout the country, including Yale. In all the years, he never took money for his efforts. He was very critical of educational systems for being "too shy of the arts" and felt that art schools were "too narrow and too pedantic".

While in Torrington he continued his active involvement with Italo-Americans. He was both a charter and life member of the Torrington UNICO Club which he helped found, and served as its national historian. Just a year before his death, he was presented with the "Good Citizen Award" by the Connecticut Grand Lodge, Order Sons of Italy in America.

While living in his hilltop retreat in Torrington, a plan was revealed to him by God when he was praying. This plan became his dream and he worked in vain for the rest of his life to realize it. His dream is perhaps best expressed in his own words in the following letter he wrote to the editor of the *New York Times*,

Editor of the New York Times
New York City, New York

For over fifty years I have been working on a Plan—World Harmony through the Fine Arts. I felt that the Arts with their meaningful beauty could inspire and help educate the people in the way of World Peace.

While visiting the City of Palermo my father pointed to me an inscription in *Teatro Massimo* which says: "L'arte Rinnova i Popoli e Rivela La Vita" (Art Renews the People and Reveals To Them The Meaning of Life).

As a student and as a sculptor this memorable saying has stimulated me to think and to feel that the Arts may be able to help open an avenue to World Peace.

The Plan calls for a large circle symbolizing the World. It will be filled by symbolical statues representing different phases of life. Each prominent sculptor to contribute one work. The center piece to symbolize life.

The world's most prominent sculptors to be represented. From the circle to the High Way there will be an avenue; it will be flanked by twelve of the greatest minds of the past and of the present, six on each side with a quotation, and to be known as the Avenue of Wisdom.

The Plan for the museum to house the paintings and the graphic arts; a theater for the dramas, music and lectures. The land landscaped to be used as a public park.

I find that all the Arts have the power to inspire and to enlighten the people and through the Arts we may attain world unity and harmony, and find a better way to enlist the interest of all the people.

The Arts have something which appeal to all and I feel that the artists of the world may discover and demonstrate how to inspire, to enlighten and to bring the people to think and work constructively for the peace and progress of the entire world.

Art is the international language—let us use it to free the world from killing and mass destruction. Our investment will pay and our effort will initiate the World Renaissance.

The fine arts have the power to renew the people's minds and to reveal to them every secret of life.

I have faith that people of good will take the plan to heart and initiate a movement to work with the help of the arts to open a real gateway to World Harmony. By a great display of all the fine arts we may reach the sensitive minds, to enrich themselves and help spread the renewing power to renew the world. For over fifty years my humble voice has been dormant in desertion. In a land of wealth I have found poverty of spirit. Where there is no vision the people perish!

An internationally renowned sculptor, a writer, a philosopher, an educator, and a minister, Mr. Abbate died in abject poverty, having achieved no progress at all on his dream. People were sympathetic; Torrington town officials however were not interested in accepting his offer of his twenty-five acres of land for an open university of art, dedicated to World Peace. And so his remaining sculptures have been dispersed; some of the most lovely ones are now at the University of Connecticut at the Benton Museum of Art.

Although his dream was never achieved, perhaps it will live on in those fortunate enough to learn about this extraordinary Renaissance man from Sicily, with his sense of classical harmony and peace, who strove to bring about a rebirth in his adopted country.

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EDUCATION

As Italians have and are still emigrating to the United States, their attitude toward their children's education appears to vary according to the time they emigrated and their socio-economic status. Those who saw no connection between schooling and the ability to earn a good living in Italy, and were themselves quite economically poor, understandably desired that their children learn very practical skills. They thought from their experience in Italy that the best way to learn these skills was through some sort of apprenticeship and regarded schooling as a waste of time. As information filtered back to the *contadini* in Italy from the early immigrants that jobs were much more plentiful in the United States and that the key to success lay in obtaining as much education as possible, attitudes underwent some change. And, of course, since early times Italians of the middle and upper classes who arrived here with a positive attitude toward schooling began with an interest in obtaining good schooling for their children.

There is an interesting example in the records of early concern for at least good elementary schooling. The northern Italians who settled in Glastonbury and built up the beautiful fruit farms, which are still owned and operated by their descendents today, noticed that the little school provided by the town where their children went was rather inadequate and run-down in comparison with other public schools. And so they donated some land on which the town erected a fine new school for them.

In many public schools there were special classes for foreign children where they were taught English, and when fluent enough, they were moved into regular classes. Because of the formation of "Little Italies" and the presence of neighborhood schools, often each school (particularly in the cities) would draw a student population from one or a few distinctive ethnic groups. Even today we find special programs and clubs in schools where Italian immigrant children are present in sizable numbers. Following the movement to suburbia after redevelopment destroyed some of the "Little Italies", we now find special attention being directed toward Italians by suburban educators.

Adult immigrants also availed themselves of the evening school facilities in the public schools in order to learn English and studies preparatory to applying for citizenship. These classes still exist today. Some of them are taught by Italians who have gone through the same process themselves and are trying to help their fellow countrymen. Of course, language was frequently learned informally and there have been many who did not like to go to the public classes. One older lady who recently came to Connecticut said that she is too shy or embarrassed to attend classes. Instead, she listens to the soap operas every afternoon on her television set and has made fine progress this way.

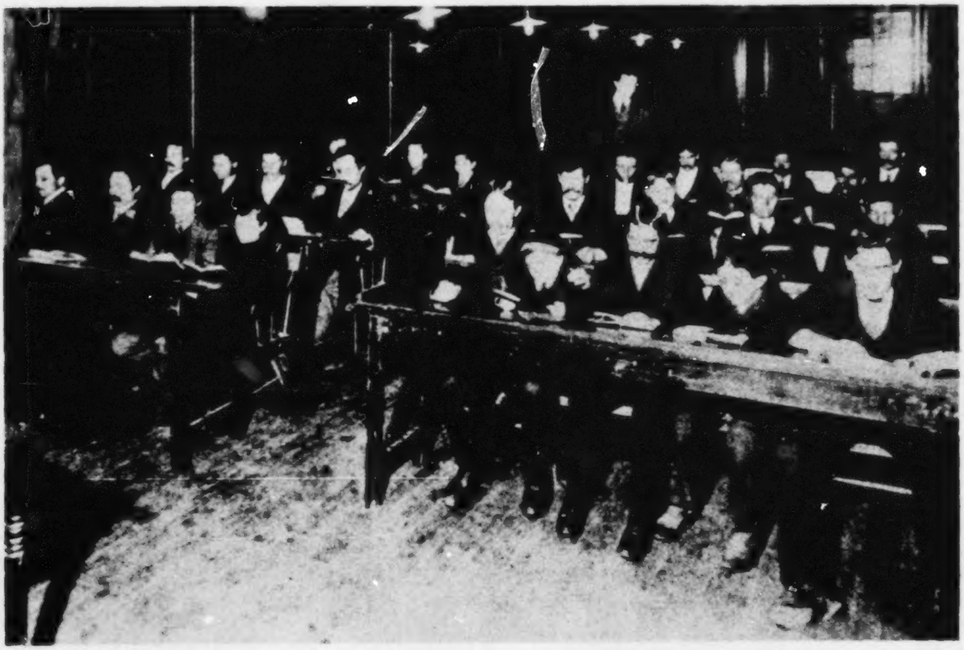
In spite of the many examples one can point to of increasing involvement with the public schools, Italo-Americans in general have been slow to take full advantage of the benefits to be gained from more schooling. Dario Diorio, a man born and educated in Italy who is now a Ph.D. candidate at Middlebury College in Modern Languages, teaches at Farmington High School and is the Education Editor of *La Voce*. In the October 1974 issue he wrote a concerned article about Italo-Americans' poor showing on educational attainment. In a recent study of education among ethnic groups, Italo-Americans were third from the bottom, with 54.3 percent of adults (25 and over) who had completed less than four years of high school. The same study shows that 13.7 percent of Italo-Americans attended colleges or universities and only 7 percent completed four or more years of college.

Italo-Americans in Connecticut evidence another concern about education. There is increasing activity to promote study of the Italian language in our schools. Mr. Diorio cites statistics showing that only 4,906 students were enrolled in Italian courses in the secondary public schools of Connecticut in 1974. Of the 283 schools, only 50 offer any courses in Italian.

There is an organization in the state, the Connecticut Chapter of the Italian Teachers' Association, which is a national society with regional level associations (in our case, New England). Nationally, a journal for teachers of Italian is published, called the *Italica*. The Connecticut chapter meets frequently and its members are outstanding educators from throughout the state who have devoted much of their energies to this goal.

Another side to Italo-American involvement in Connecticut schools has taken place in the private sector. Two Italian orders of nuns, who were sent originally from Italy to help educate immigrant children, have been active in this state since the early 1900's.

The Sisters of the Sacred Heart are an order chosen by Bishop Scalabrini because of their outstanding work in Italian schools. He requested that they journey overseas following the immigrants.



Adult Italian immigrant night class, Hartford, early 1900's

In New Haven they first operated an orphanage and Sunday School at St. Michael's Church and later opened a school where they continue their work today. They run several other schools in the state including a girl's high school in connection with their Motherhouse in Hamden.

The second order, the Filippini Sisters, had a long history in Italy before their arrival in America. The order was founded by Lucy Filippini, who in 1692, was called by Cardinal Marcantonio Barbarigo to his diocese of Montefiascone for the purpose of instructing the young girls.

After more than two centuries of devotion to religious teaching, Pope Pius X commanded Mother Rosa Leoni to send five sisters to help establish good education for the Italian immigrant children at St. Joachim Church in Trenton, New Jersey. On September 5, 1910, their first school was opened, and in 1921 they opened their first Motherhouse with the arrival of Mother Rosa Leoni and twenty young sisters from Rome.

In 1935 they opened their first school in Connecticut, St. Anthony Elementary and High School in Bristol, where the Connecticut Motherhouse is also located. In 1960 the school had a staff of seventeen sisters and twelve lay teachers, with an enrollment of 1140 students. The high school is now closed because a much needed regional high school was built. The elementary school is still in operation. In 1935 they also opened Our Lady of Mount Carmel Elementary School in Meriden, which in 1960 had nine sisters and one lay teacher and an enrollment of 672 students. In 1936 the Filippini Sisters inaugurated Saint Sebastian Elementary School in Middletown. In 1960 there were seven sisters and two lay teachers responsible for 765 pupils.

In 1940 Saint Patrick-Saint Anthony Elementary School was opened in Hartford. In 1960 there were ten sisters and three lay teachers and an enrollment of 586 pupils. This school is closed and the building has become an inner city public school. In 1944 St. Peter's Elementary School was opened in Torrington. In 1960 there were seven sisters and one lay teacher with 764 pupils. In 1944 the Sacred Heart Elementary School opened in Stamford. In 1945 Saint Ann's Mission opened in New Britain, which later added on a junior high school, grades 7–9.

The Filippini Sisters also take care of Holy Land in Waterbury and make the arrangements for pilgrims to visit there from all over the world. They run a camp, Villa Ferretti, in Winsted where each summer girls, ages 7–12, from all over New England can enjoy out-of-door activities and the lovely rural setting.

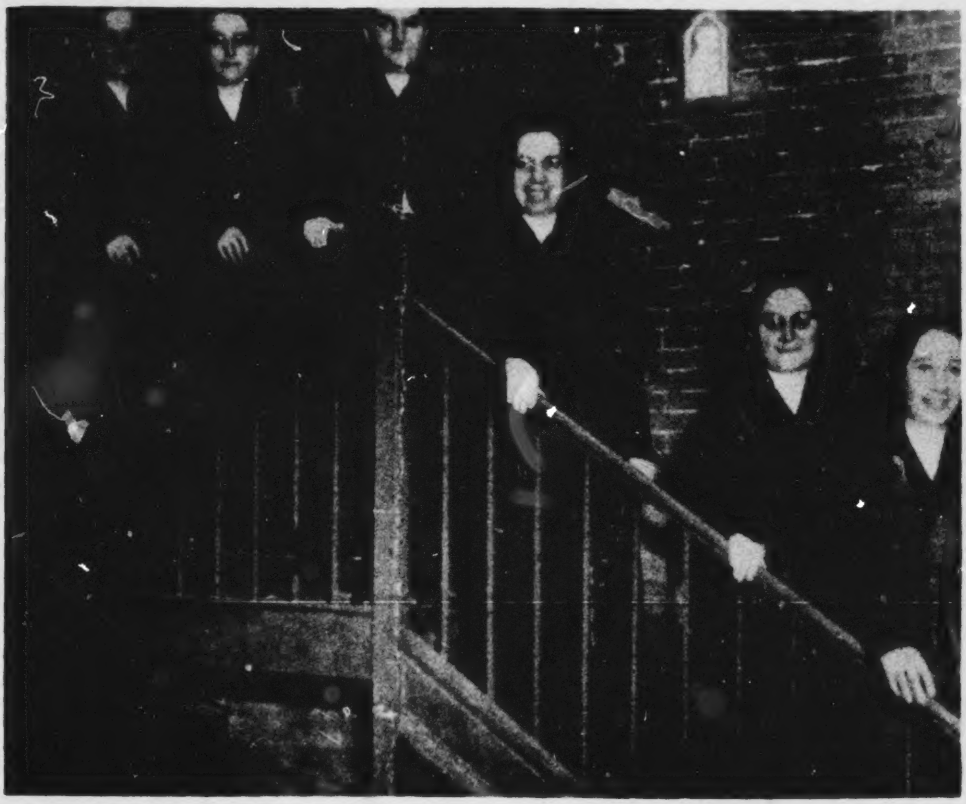
In September of 1975, the Filippini Sisters opened the Villa Montessori School in Winsted for children from 2½ to 4. The school will be operated according to the philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori, an internationally known Italian doctor and educator. She believed that a child has dignity and spiritual worth, a potential for self development, and innate sensitivity to help her choose what is appropriate from the environment for her growth.

It is interesting to note that there are still a few sisters from Italy who teach in these orders in Connecticut schools. Most sisters today are American with many ethnic groups represented, although there is a very sizable percentage of Italo-Americans among them. In the education for both orders, the girls do have to study Italian and may become quite proficient at it. The Italian language was formerly taught in all of their schools. Today, only the high schools may offer it, but the sisters do sometimes teach a few words in elementary school classes and find their Italian skills most helpful when teaching newly arrived immigrant children.

Although it was not possible to collect accurate data, informal conversations with the sisters indicated that they think their student population even today contains a disproportionately large percentage of Italian or Italo-American pupils. Just by walking around the schools and noting the names inscribed on plaques of the parents who made donations, one can see that almost all of them are clearly Italian names.

The sisters said that they do attempt to maintain some vestiges of Italian culture in their schools through various special programs. At one school they held an Italian festival during 1974-75, where the students performed the *tarantella* and sang Italian folk songs.

No discussion of Italian involvement with Connecticut schools would be complete without drawing attention to the growing number of private Montessori schools in the state and the profound influence this famous Italian lady has had upon our philosophy and educational practices in the public schools. School teachers who are educated at our state colleges or universities, frequently study her writings and take field trips to schools modelled after her ideas. American Montessori schools offer a stimulating combination of openness in trusting the curiosity of young children and the provision of some very basic structured learning experiences which enables them to become confident of their own abilities and able to operate quite independently.



St. Lucy Filipini Sisters of St. Anthony's Convent in Hartford around 1900

POLITICS

Italian-Americans have taken an active interest in politics in America from the Colonial period. One early Italian-American statesman was William Paca, a lawyer who became the Governor of Maryland and a signer of the Declaration of Independence. In his later years he was also a United States district judge. Another was Onorio Razzolini, who, soon after his naturalization in 1732, was appointed Armourer and Keeper of the Stores of Maryland. As such he was head of practically all defense measures of the Colony.

One of the first *elected* Italian public officials was Filippo Mazzei of Virginia. In 1774 he was elected as one of the twelve members of the committee that was to correspond with the other twelve colonies. Carlo Bellini, the first instructor of modern languages in the United States, was appointed "clerk of foreign correspondence" for the state of Virginia to translate and handle ever increasing correspondence between Virginia and foreign countries.

There are few families in the United States, regardless of their national background, that can boast of as large a number of distinguished members as the Taliaferro family of Virginia who, in later years, spread to every state. Some researchers have traced this family all the way back to Julius Caesar. Benjamin Taliaferro was a delegate to the Constitutional Convention in 1798. He was a senator and judge of the Supreme Court of Georgia and a member of the Congress of the United States from 1799 to 1802. Descendants of this family held many public offices through the years.

In the early 1890's, Italian traveler Giuseppe Giacosa visited the United States. He quickly recognized that in America "he who does not vote, does not get by." Economic advancement came more easily after naturalization and political involvement. In order to win respect from the native community, it was necessary to gain a voice in the conduct of government. In order to vote, it was necessary to become a citizen.

In Italian and other ethnic neighborhoods, city politicians generally came from Irish backgrounds and found that they needed a contact man between themselves and the ethnic masses. These contact men had to speak the language, understand ethnic customs, and know the best means of molding opinions and winning votes. Often these intermediaries first caught the attention of the politicians by organizing a segment of the colony, perhaps a benefit society or a group of fellow workers, and leading them to the polls to vote. Such neighborhood leaders held power within the ethnic district because their recommendation could mean jobs for friends.

For ambitious men, control of votes in the immigrant quarter could be turned to personal advantage, either to obtain important positions within the political machine, or to establish a competing organization. Winning an elective office became a means of gaining esteem as well as making Americans aware of Italian influence. It did not take the Italian immigrant very long to realize the power of the vote.

At first Italian-Americans tended to be Republicans, up until the Wilson-Hughes election of 1916. This may be explained by the fact that the local Democratic organizations were dominated by the Irish who were very reluctant to share their power with the new immigrants. Another reason is that the Republican Party called itself "the full dinner pail" party. This naturally attracted many new immigrants. So the first Italian-Americans to achieve prominence in politics started as Republicans. One example is Fiorello LaGuardia, who became mayor of New York City from 1934-1945. Others are Edward Corsi, former federal Commissioner of Immigration, and John A. Volpe, twice elected governor of Massachusetts, who is presently the Ambassador to Italy. He is the first Italian-American in our history to be named as such.

In Connecticut, the first Italians to be elected to the state legislature were Republicans Frank Arrigoni of Durham, and Salvator D'Esopo of Hartford in 1909-10. Arrigoni was a general contractor and D'Esopo an attorney. Both served in local politics of their respective towns.

Also of Hartford, others who were active members of the Republican Party were Francis Pallotti who, upon graduation from Yale Law School in 1911, accepted a job as an associate judge to the police court. Three years later he was named judge of the city police court. From 1923 to 1929 he served as Secretary of State, becoming the first Italo-American to hold a statehood office. He was also the first state attorney general of Italian descent and he later became a Superior Court judge.

Francis Antonio Pallotti, first Italian-American to become Secretary of State in Connecticut

In more recent years, Nathan Agostinelli, former mayor of Manchester, was elected in 1971 as the first Italo-American state comptroller. Vincent Laudone briefly served as the first Italo-American state chairman of the Republican Party.

The first woman mayor in Connecticut was Ann Uccello of Hartford. Eventually she accepted a post with the Nixon Administration in the Transportation Department where she is presently working.

As the voting strength of Italian-Americans grew, Irish Democratic politicians became anxious to win their votes. During the 1920's Italian-Americans and other Catholics were under attack by the Ku Klux Klan and other extremist groups. In those years the Democrats gained much support as defenders of the immigrants against such groups.

When Al Smith won the Democratic nomination for president of the United States in 1928, Italian-Americans and other minority groups flocked to the polls to vote for him. Smith, the four-time governor of New York, was the first American of Italian ancestry to become a candidate for the presidency of the United States. His grandfather, Emanuel Smith, was born in Genoa, Italy, in 1859. Al Smith was also the first Catholic to win a major party ticket. In 1909, Columbus Day was made an official New York holiday through a bill introduced by him. Smith died in 1944 and became the first Catholic layman to have his body lie in state at St. Patrick's Cathedral. Since that time Italian-Americans have played in increasing role in Democratic Party leadership. Many Italian-American Democrats have held important state and national offices.

The first Italian-born mayor of any city or town in Connecticut was the Hon. Angelo Paonessa, who was elected mayor of New Britain in 1922. He was re-elected in 1924 and 1928. He was a native of Ginigliano, Prov. di Contanzaro, Calabria, Italy.

In 1951, Albert Morano of New Britain became the first to be elected to Congress and was followed in quick succession by Albert Cretella, Mim Daddario, Bob Giamo, and Ella Grasso, who served as Secretary of State from 1959 to 1971.

Anthony Armentano, Samuel Tedesco and Attilio Frassenelli all were elected to the post of Lieutenant Governor in the 1960's.

Italian-Americans of both parties served as state treasurer. These were Dr. Frank Anaslasi (1941-43), Joseph Adorno (1947-55), John Ottaviano (1955-59), John Speziale (1959-61), and John Iorio (1970-71).

In 1971, the first Italo-American ever to be selected as a candidate for governor received his party's nomination. That person was Congressman Emilio Q. Daddario.

The political progress of Italo-Americans was further strengthened when the 1974 Democratic convention selected Congresswoman Ella Grasso as its standard bearer in the gubernatorial race. Another of the contenders in the Democratic race for the top post was former Norwalk Mayor Frank Zullo. On the Republican side, Bridgeport Mayor Nicholas Panuzio was one of the key candidates for governor. He failed to gain nomination, but had he won, the two top contenders for governor of Connecticut would have both been Italian-American.

In any event, Congresswoman Ella Grasso, the daughter of northern Italian immigrants, won the gubernatorial race. She became the first woman governor of the State of Connecticut as well as the first woman governor ever in the United States to win in her own right. She is now being mentioned as a possible vice presidential candidate in the 1976 national elections.

Year by year the Italian-American has increased his influence in the local and state politics of our cities and towns. One has only to look over the rolls of our cities and towns to see the many hundreds of thousands of Italian-American voters and public officials. The Italian-American's political philosophy is practical. To him the government stands or falls, not by its ideal theory, but by its concrete benefits. He basically condones no adverse discrimination and forgets no favor. So, while the *padrone* system is gone, political bossism exists and the government is a tacit *quid pro quo* arrangement where the political aspirant who can give concrete evidence of power is not forgotten.

Regardless of party, the Italian-American law makers have shown a notable tendency to support labor and welfare measures beneficial to the working class from which they spring. Like the Irish, they have helped bring about the emergence of modern America's liberal society.

THE PRESS

Connecticut's first Italian-language newspaper according to the Connecticut Register and Manual for 1893, was the weekly newspaper *La Estella l'Italia* of New Haven. It appeared in those registers throughout the end of the nineteenth century. A few other publications were begun in the late 1800's. For a short time in Hartford there was a *La Patria Italiana,* another weekly in the year 1896. In 1897, the weekly *Pro Patria* was published in New Haven. It lasted throughout the 1890's and 1900's. *Il Corriere del Connecticut*, started in 1898 in New Haven, was the longest lived weekly Italian publication. It lasted over a half a century, ending service not too long after the death of its publisher and founder, as was often the case with many Italo-American publications.

A number of publications were begun in the early 1900's. *La Stella l'Italia,* of New Haven, an edition of *L'Araldo Italiano* of New York City, appeared only during the year 1902. In 1905 the weekly *Il Sole* appeared in Bridgeport, and in 1906 *Le Tribuna del Connecticut* was published in that same city. The first daily came from New Haven's *L'Indipendente* which was organized about 1905, became a daily around 1907 and an evening paper in 1908. It was also in 1906 that the first Italian Catholic *La Parola Cattolica* came to be. It, too, lasted throughout the early 1900's in New Haven. In 1907 and into the mid 1900's came the paper *San Carlino* also of New Haven. By 1907, Waterbury, too, had a weekly by the name of *Il Progresso di Waterbury*.

At this point we should point out that *Il Progresso Italo Americano* of New York City had circulated throughout Connecticut and continues to do so. It is known as the oldest Italo-American publication in the United States.

Today, Connectiut has four known Italo-American publications. Two are monthly news bulletins: (1) *The Middletown Bulletin*, published by Max Corvo and circulating in the greater Middletown area for many years; and (2) *L'Echo d'Italia* published by the Italian religious order of St. Charles Scalabrini from St. Michael's Italian Parish in New Haven. The other two Italo-American publications in the state of Connecticut are newspapers: (1) *The Connecticut Italian Bulletin;* and (2) *La Voce, Inc.*

The Connecticut Italian Bulletin marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of its founding on April 21, 1975. This Italian-American bilingual newspaper was founded by its present publisher and editor, Ven S. Sequenzia, presently of Hollywood, Florida. He was a newly arrived immigrant from Italy in 1949, when he decided he would organize a very much needed Italo-American publication in the capitol city of Connecticut. Thus, he formed the (ECB), European Cultural Bureau Publishers in 1949. The first edition was published on April 21, *(Natale di Roma)* in 1950. At that time the newspaper was known as the *Hartford Bulletin.* From that time on this statewide publication has served the Italo-American community of Connecticut. The staff of the *Bulletin* has worked hard to improve the "Italian image." They put out a special Guide to Rome and Italy in 1960, following the pattern of the widely acclaimed one done by the *New York Times* in 1950, and have just recently updated their Guide for the 1975 Holy Year. They also published an *Italian Review Magazine* and have cooperated on the production of various television and radio programs dealing with Italian-Americans in the state. During the mid 1960's, Mr. Sequenzia and his family moved to Florida and founded the *Florida Italian Bulletin.* In 1968, he appointed Gennaro J. Capobianco of Hartford as his personal representative in Connecticut and Capobianco eventually became the managing editor of the *Connecticut Italian Bulletin.* The *Connecticut* and *Florida Italian Bulletin* pioneered in the formation of the *Federazione della Stampa Italiana nel Mondo* (Italian World Wide Press Federation).

La Voce, Inc. was founded by four Italo-Americans: L. Ruzzier of Vernon; G. Lonardo of New Britain; D. Chiarello of Torrington; and G. Capobianco of East Hartford. This group met in the fall and winter of 1973 in Hartford, and incorporation papers were drawn up making *La Voce* a non-profit and educational newspaper.

The first issue was published on December 8, 1973, with the following ideas and aims in mind: One-third of the people of Connecticut are Italian-Americans, three hundred thousand are Italian born, and one hundred sixty-nine are still Italian citizens. According to the managing editor:

> In our proud history as settlers of this state, we have never had a unified voice. We have never been considered a minority because of our large numbers, but our problems have been the same as those of a minority. Our biggest obstacle has been the language barrier, blocking the way to education, better job opportunities, social relationships and participation in civic affairs. We have rights granted to us by God and by the Constitution of the United States. *La Voce* will demand these rights. We have responsibilities toward our country and our fellow man. *La Voce* will constantly remind us of our responsibilities. *La Voce* will speak out with courage and with conviction. We will speak for the poor and the rich, the educated and the uneducated, and

we will be heard. *La Voce* will help us communicate with each other about our activities; it will educate our people about the great contributions made by those who came before us to this great country and state; it will give us a sense of pride in our culture, our art, our love of music, our strong family ties and the creative talents of our people; it will involve our young people in humane and charitable activities; it will sponsor educational, social and cultural programs for our young; it will give its moral strength to the building of homes for our aged where they can enjoy each others' company in a truly Italian atmosphere. Finally, as a non-profit, politically independent bilingual newspaper, *La Voce* will truly be the courageous voice of all our people. In all our efforts our motto will be: SEMPRE AVANTI: UNITI!

RADIO AND CINEMA

There are a number of Italian radio programs. The only Italian daily radio program is that of Lucio Ruzzier on WRYM 840 of Newington, which covers all of Connecticut, parts of Massachusetts, Rhode Island and New York. Other programs are scheduled weekly. On Sunday mornings at 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and also one hour on Saturday, on WRYM 840, are the Salvatore Nifosi and Paolo Privitera programs. On WNTY of Southington from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Sundays is the Italian program *Melodie e Ricordi* by Enrico Castellano, assisted by Leonardo Cotugno. On WCCC on Sundays is the program *Carosello Musicale* by Paolo Fichera, assisted by T. Magno. Every Thursday on WRYM Zia Giuliana of Hartford may be heard, answering letters sent in by listeners. She is sometimes called the "Dear Abby of Italian Radio."

Mario Interlandi and Roberto Caderelli of New Britain bring Italian movies and live Italian show entertainment from Italy, with many well known Italian stars.

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE ITALIAN-AMERICAN IN CONNECTICUT TODAY

It is most fitting that we should end this section on the Italian-American of Connecticut by asking what it means to be an Italo-American in the state today. Answers to this question can most properly be provided by Italo-Americans who have already expressed themselves and are not trying to conjure up a response to our interests.

The first answer is a beautifully written study of an Italian neighborhood in Waterbury done by an undergraduate at the University of Connecticut, Rosemary Polletta.

The Italian-Americans of Waterbury

It is awfully difficult to stand aside and view a part of your life objectively. One tends to take too many things for granted. In observing the sub-culture of the Italian-Americans in Waterbury, I have tried to put myself outside the group to avoid doing that. But for me these people hold a distinct and fascinating culture. I do realize that I am being a bit biased in saying that only because, my father being an immigrant from the old country and my mother a first generation Italian-American, I am not far removed from the various traditions and practices that they observe in this country. The following culture scene will, I hope, give the reader some insight into the values and beliefs of these people.

Immigration

The United States offered a great opportunity for the poor farmers from southern Italy to make some money. Many families from Pontelandolfo started to filter into Waterbury around the 1900's. My father's father, leaving a wife and 13 children behind, came to this country to work in the factory. He only stayed between five and ten years before he decided to return home. Meanwhile, my father (who was sixteen years old) and his brother (who was twenty) decided that they would come to America to work ,too. They didn't have enough money for the trip though, so a friend of theirs helped them to stow away on the ship. That was in 1927. It was in 1941 or 1942 that the authorities found my father out. He had to sign up for Social Security, which had just come out, and while they were checking everyone out they found out that Ralph Polletta had no passport or citizen papers!

So, they sent Dad off to Cuba.

After all that was settled, Dad returned to work in Waterbury. He was employed by the same factory for forty years until his retirement two years ago. Those forty years were not all happy, though. He had plenty of arguments with the foremen about his job. According to him they were not fair in their work; and according to his bosses, Ralph was too nervous and hot tempered!

My uncle opened up a small grocery store with his wife, but sold it and returned to the factory where the money was better.

A lot of men like my father and my uncle found it tough when they settled down here. It was not only because of the depression, but because of the discrimination they directly or indirectly faced by being immigrants.

An Italian-American's views on education are quite the opposite of what one might think. They stress rigid schooling of their children at least until high school. If the children want to go on to college, that's fine. Most of the parents seem to want their children to make out better in this world than they did. However, many of the recent immigrants between the ages of seventeen and twenty-three are already working in various factories. Some of them attend night school to get acquainted with the English language, but that is as far as they go.

These people think of marriage as a sacred union. There is no age restriction—they can marry as young as sixteen if they wish—but children in school must wait until they are finished. Education comes first.

Tony Guerrera came to Waterbury over fourteen years ago after living in Venezuela for a number of years. Because he is my mother's first cousin, our family helped him to find a rent for his family. They found an ideal place—the second floor of our house. I remember us all pitching in to help peel off old wallpaper and setting up the refrigerator and looking for a good used stove.

Tony's wife Josie was so good to me when she watched me for my mother. I would always try to talk to her in broken English so she would understand me! But I think that it was a lot of pointing and hand gestures that did it! She introduced me to my first lupino bean! Not to mention the meals drenched in pure olive oil.

Frankie and Jeanie were eleven and thirteen when they were put into the third and fourth grades of Webster Grammar School. Jeanie doesn't remember that far back, but she really doesn't think that being an immigrant affected her in a bad way. Of course, there were those three or four months where she didn't know what was going on, but after a while they got into the swing of things. They were very studious and their marks showed this. There were other children from Italy who were going to the same school, but Jeanie never became very close to them. She occasionally did run into some kids who would fool around and call her "guinea" but it did not upset her too much.

Frankie, on the other hand, was a little different. He was very quiet, but he didn't allow things to bother him. Aunt Josie told me of the time Frankie took on my brother's paper route and split it with this other cousin of his who was born here. Well, it seemed that this cousin wasn't very responsible with his share of the route. So, Frank decided to have a talk with him—he asked him why he hadn't delivered the papers. Eventually, the situation got out of hand, and this cousin started to call Frankie derogatory names, so "quiet" Frankie let him have it right in the face!

Aunt Josie also told me of the problems her nephews got into when they were in grammar school. They came over a few years after Aunt Josie but they encountered some of the same sort of discrimination.

My visit with Aunt Josie was quite nice. Jeanie brought her wedding pictures down from her upstairs rent and we sipped a little Strega and ate a few *biscotta* and *pizza*. Uncle Tony showed us the work he had done to his garden since he's been laid off and Jeanie was finally getting her rent straightened out. Frank will be home from the service in the spring . . . yes, everything was just fine.

These people worked hard for what they've got. Sure they have big houses and plots of land, but overtime on construction and factory jobs from most, if not all, the members of the family was put in for it. Jeanie mentioned that the family—even friends—were closer before. But children grow up and are more mobile in this society. They make their own families—but the close ties are still there.

I remember Pasquale used to live about two blocks from our house and we'd go visit him maybe once or twice a month besides seeing him and his family at Mass every week. Then he moved about ten blocks from us and we'd see each other now and then. Well, today Pasquale's sons have gotten married, and have moved out into the suburbs. We still see each other, usually when someone has died or is sick or has gotten married or if it has been too long since the last time we have seen each other. Regardless of this, my father and Pasquale still have a close relationship.

I had the opportunity to observe a fairly recent immigrant family. They moved into the upstairs rent after Aunt Josie and Uncle Tony moved out. It is Aunt Josie's sister and brother-in-law, their daughter and son. We like to keep it in the family!

Unlike Jeanie and Frankie, Rose and Pierro are much older and have finished school. During the first year Pierro and his father went to night school to learn English, while Rose took a six-month full-time course. Uncle Tony helped their father find a job—working construction. Pierro and Rose both work in a factory now.

Their mother had been sick when they first came over here. They thought that moving would do her some good, but it actually made her worse. She had a hard time with the doctors and hospitals, they couldn't find out what was wrong with her. They even went to a psychiatrist (one who could speak Italian), but he couldn't help her. She became withdrawn and defensive to the point that nothing could be done to help her. Then they decided to try another hospital, Saint Raphaele's. And within weeks she improved, and her family doesn't understand why! They think it is because of the name of the hospital . . . could be.

Everything is normal now. Pierro is a car freak and he's a much flashier dresser! Many of his close friends, *paesanos*, have indoctrinted him well!

Rose is more serious. She stays home and helps her mother, and, unfortunately, keeps house.

Most of what they encounter as discrimination is usually joked off now. People do not get all upset by being called a "guinea." It mostly depends upon the situation.

Food

The Italians are especially noted for the quality and quantity of their food. They have learned to waste nothing—everything is good for you! This includes raw onion, garlic, lots of bread; the list goes on and on. People still eat spaghetti or macaroni at least twice a week. There are no written recipes that the women follow for the usual dishes like *scarole, pasta fazool**, stuffed peppers, fried squash flowers, tomato sauce, even pizza! My mother frequently makes many of these "treats" even though she has become more "Americanized" in her cooking these past few years. There is one dish that my mother tries to make at least once a year and that is *polenta*. It's cooked in a big pot for at least an hour and a half. It is made of corn meal, a little water and a few seasonings thrown in. It is served hot with tomato sauce—in this particular family.

Because these people come from a poor area in Italy, they've had to use a lot of basic foods—most of which they would be able to grow on their farms.

Imported cheese and home-made wine is usually taken as a mid-afternoon snack. That reminds me of when Aunt Josie first came over; she brought with her a lot of her home-made cheese which had gone bad during the trip. Well, Jeanie, Aunt Josie and I sat in the front hall way cleaning the worms out of this smelly cheese!

There are no age restrictions on drinking wine, either. One night, I remember, Frankie drank a quart of wine with his meal and got dreadfully sick. No one got angry with him, they were just upset that he had finished the wine!

After Christmas, many families are busy making sausages. My mother and Aunt Josie would hang theirs from a line in the attic to dry out for the rest of the winter. A bread that they also make at this time is *cigurri*—fried and dried fat mixed with dough.

A brief run-down of a few other types of foods:

calamari - small squid cooked in sauce till tender.
mooleniamo - slices of eggplant dipped in flour and eggs and fried; then put in a pan and each layer covered with sauce and baked.
aponzetta - veal stuffed with bread, chicken liver, eggs, oregano, and baked.
zucchini - fried squash with onions.
brajole - rolled up beef, flavored with oregano and other herbs, used mostly in tomato sauce.

Italians also go wild over wild mushrooms fried in olive oil, stuffed artichokes and stuffed peppers, broccoli mixed with *gnochi (cavattelli)* and olive oil, and the best is *sufritta*. It is part of a cow's lung, cut up in little cubes, fried then cooked in tomato sauce and served on a hard roll. It is not made anymore because the stores have stopped selling it; it isn't supposed to be good for your health!

The thing that fascinated me most was when my parents and I visited a distant cousin. It happened to be on a Sunday afternoon and they were making chicken soup. There was a dish in the middle of the table with the cooked eggs, head, feet and organs of the chicken. Italians do not believe in wasting anything!

Two types of desserts which they enjoy, besides *spumoni*, are *sfoglia*—a turnover made of strips of crust filled with cream, and *canolli*—a rolled dough filled with cream and fried. They tend to be very filling and sweet.

The Church, Feastdays and Holidays

Many Italians are very religious, especially the women. One often hears jokes about the little old ladies with the flowered kerchiefs on their heads belting out the Holy Rosary in church! They would be the first ones to say the *novenas* and the last ones to finish.

When I was younger, our parish would have the morning Masses in Italian, and I learned to say a few of the prayers in Italian along with some of the other kids in my class. (In order to go to my grammar school, one's parents had to be Italian, therefore, we were familiar with the language but did not speak it fluently.)

Many of the older women keep various religious pictures in their houses and also have an offering candle burning in front of their favorite saint. Relatives still in Italy send gold medals, crosses and rosary beads over as gifts.

Besides being religious, they are also a bit superstitious. One often sees *il cornu* hanging off their watch bands or around their necks. They say that it is a charm to ward off the evil eye.

For Saint Anthony's feast day, the older women of the parish get together and bake little loaves of bread and hand them out at the morning Mass.

The biggest feast day in Waterbury that practically everyone participates in is the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. It lasts for one week during the summer and is held outside the church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Toy and game booths are erected along with a booth for *zeppolli*, fried pieces of dough covered with sauce. On the last day of the feast there is a procession held by the various groups and organizations of the parish. The purpose of this feast was to honor the patron saint, but now I have been told that it is to raise money for the parish. As the people march down the street saying the rosary they pin money on the statue and kiss its feet; all to the tune of the Knights of Columbus Marching Band!

Many immigrants do celebrate American holidays like Thanksgiving and the Fourth of July. They seem to follow the customs of the ones who've been here for some time. Friends and relatives are always invited, a lot of food is eaten, and arguments always erupt, but everyone has a good time!

During our family's Christmas dinner (or Thanksgiving or Easter dinner) our discussions range from the latest news from distant relatives to arguments about politics (from the workers' point of view). We always seem to get very nostalgic and talk about the "good old days" when our parents were young and lived in Italy—we tend to feel a strong sense of unity with them (that is myself and my brother and many of my cousins). Everyone seems to mellow out eating *castagni* and drinking wine!

Easter is one of the more solemn holy days. During the week before, women are busy making loaves of Easter bread (twelve eggs mixed with flour), and *pizza gegna* (a big turnover filled with ricotta, eggs, ham and milk, and baked in the oven). These breads are usually made on Good Friday. Before they are put in the oven, my mother makes the sign of the cross over them.

Clubs – Games

Half of the Italian-Americans in Waterbury trace their lineage back to the small farming village of Pontelandolfo, Italy. These immigrants decided to form a club and named it after their little town; the Ponte Club. They have just recently remodeled it adding on a replica of the tower, actually a fortress, built for the town. All of the members contributed to its development, some doing the electric work, others building and brick-laying. It is their joy and pride! Members do not form a "clique" and alienate themselves from the rest of their *paesanos*. My father left the club quite a few years ago because he didn't agree with the way the new generations were organizing it. He still has many friends who are members, which just goes to show that membership is not mandatory for friendship.

La morra is the odd-evens game that a group of men usually play at family gatherings. Each guy calls out either an odd or even number, simultaneously throwing out any number of fingers of one hand. One's fingers do not have to match the number he calls out, rather, the total number of fingers in the middle of the circle must match the number he called out. If it does, that player wins a point.

Bocce is a game which is comparable to our bowling. A cue ball is thrown down a level piece of ground; then the players must be partners getting two balls each. No more than eight balls are used so that as many as eight people can play (each getting one ball). Whoever gets his ball closest to the cue ball gets a point.

Another favorite pastime is card playing. Women do not have any group games like the men. Now and then they join in with the men and play cards, but not very often. I used to watch my cousins play *scopa* with Italian cards, but regular cards are used now. The older women usually get together in the afternoons at one of their houses and have coffee and talk for about an hour. It was while listening to these conversations of my grandmother that I learned a few choice Italian words!

The church provides for most of the women's social life. The Holy Rosary Society holds meetings and a few dinners and social gatherings.

Italians are great kidders, too! Some of their jokes lose a little something in their translation, but here is one joke that my uncle never fails to tell us every year . . .

When the Pilgrims came over from Europe, there were these Italians on one of the ships. When they reached land they got so excited that one of them fell overboard! His buddy looked down and exclaimed, *"Che peccato!"**; and that is how Cape Cod got it's name!

*translation: it's a shame!

Funerals

When an Italian dies the body is removed from house or hospital to the funeral home of nationality. It is then embalmed and waked for two days and two nights. On the third day, they bring the coffin to the church for high Mass--early in the morning. The families of the deceased tend to buy expensive caskets. At the cemetery, members of the family throw carnations over the casket after the priest says a prayer. Then they leave. The casket is then lowered into the ground. The family is in mourning for at least a year after the death. Some say that the drive from the church to the cemetery is made with an open hearse, displaying the flowers, but this is not done anymore in Waterbury.

Old People

Grandparents and old friends are very much respected and cared for by their families. The young often think of the old peoples' ways as being odd or strange. But as they get older they realize that these people have a certain something that is unique. Their attitudes and beliefs are appreciated and treasured more. Back in the "good old days" those people had to adjust to a totally new life which was hard, discriminating and lonely. For all that, I respect their strong will and bodies, their perseverance and compassion . . . even their hot tempers!

Letter to the Editor

The second answer is a letter to the editor of a major Connecticut newspaper, which addresses itself very directly to the question.

Dear Mr. Editor:

So often I am asked the question, why I consider myself Italian-American, not just plain American. To begin with one should probably ask the question: What is an Italian-American? An Italian-American is one who is either an Italian immigrant who has lived in the United States for the rest of his natural life and/or has become a citizen of this great country.

I, for one, fit the category of one who has descended from Italian immigrants, my paternal and maternal grandparents. It was because of them, more than any other factor, that I have retained my pluralistic ethnicity. I've retained it because I wanted to; not because I had to. It was a free choice and one that I shall never ever be sorry for, despite the agony of trying to uphold beautiful customs and traditions. The word "agony" is used to properly describe the fight to preserve "cultural pluralism" in the midst of continuing prejudice and discimination by lay governmental and church people alike. There are those, of course, of Italian descent who emphatically deny such prejudices and discrimination because they have lived a sheltered life and have remained with the silent majority. I, of course, have chosen to be not only Italian-American, but one who cares about the Italo-American community and the quality of life in all of its aspects. There are many problems that have to be rectified if Italian-Americans are to continue to maintain themselves as such in the light of a culture that is undeniably one of the greatest, if not the greatest in the world.

With the Thanksgiving holiday at hand, I offer my own personal thanks to Almighty God, that my immigrant grandparents despite many difficulties were able to immigrate to this great country. They suffered the pain of prejudice and discrimination and only God knows what else so that their children, grandchildren and future generations may enjoy a reasonably comfortable life with America's opportunities at hand; and for this I am so grateful and forever appreciative.

Gennaro J. Capobianco

The last answer we have to the question, What it means to be an Italo-American in Connecticut today, is a personal and sensitive essay by one of Connecticut's secondary school teachers.

Italian-American is Beautiful

Second generation Italians who have decided to define themselves as Italian-Americans have done so for various reasons. For some, being Italian-American is a conversation topic; for others a particular distinction or novelty added to their Americanism.

For me it was not a choice. I don't think I ever wanted to or thought I would so define myself. As far back as kindergarten when I discovered the sweetness and kindness of the Irish nuns and the bigotry and unkindness of the American children, I have wanted to be an American. I pursued that desire for far too many years, until I had finished college, begun my profession, and half-raised a family.

I did all the things they said to do. And I achieved a moderate success. It should have been enough.

Perhaps if I had become a brilliant success, it might have been enough. I would have had enough money to join the country clubs of the very rich, who are free, I understand, in the way I used to be free, in my Italian childhood days.

But being a middle-class American is not a freeing experience. For the material benefits it provides, it imposes conditions. Those conditions are conformity, independence, and solitude.

I knew I wasn't happy with that, but I did not understand why. Some deep crying need in me made me join the Italian-American Historical Society when I read about its formation. As I refreshed my memory with its own past, I felt at home. I knew I was on the right track. But there were still many hang-ups that I had to overcome in my return to roots. Strangely enough, the biggest one, I overcame inadvertently. I went to see the picture *Amarcord*. If you have seen it, and you are Italian, you may understand what I felt—anger and shame. The film really exposes Italians. They are made ridiculous, over-serious, over-earnest, over-sentimental, over-talkative. They are made laughable. But because I was so angry, I knew there was truth in it. I know my own reaction indicated a recognition of the truth. Italians *are* ridiculous. They *are* laughable. They *are* funny. All the extremes in that film are absolutely true. I know them. I've been there. And I'm still there.

When I accepted that truth about myself, I understood that term, "Black is beautiful." I understood what it means to know what you are, whatever and however that may be, and yet to accept it, to love it. When I accepted my Italianness, I accepted myself in a way I have not done since my first day of school. It has been a truly liberating, happy experience.

Italians of my mother's generation knew nothing about the psychological rearing of children. Many of them believe that a child is born good or bad. I know that isn't true. But I believe that the genes we inherit are far, far more significant than any conditioning we may experience. An Italian is born with music on his tongue and rhythm in his body. He's born with feelings just under the hair of his skin. He's born with an extra fine sensitivity and a too easily bruised spirit. The only Italian I have read about in my admittedly small researchings into the *Hartford Courant* of 1836 was being admitted, according to the newspaper account, to an asylum for the insane. After reading several months' selections of the *Courant* for the year 1836, I understand perfectly why that would be so. No person with even the smallest amount of Italian blood could have existed sanely in the New England of that time. Some of us are still having the same problem.

Black is beautiful. And so is Italian. And

Italian-American. We are Americans with Italy in our blood. What better gift can we give to our country?

Mrs. Dorothy Sterpka

GLOSSARY

calcina - lime (mineral) or lime water used in the preparation of the pergamena, or talisman used against the evil powers.

campanilismo - regionalism; describes the narrow horizons of village life, derived from *campana* (bell) and *campanile* (bell tower), meaning that the villagers refuse to extend socio-cultural contact beyond the distance that the village church bell can be heard.

contadini - peasants or farmers in Italy.

espresso - strongly brewed Italian coffee.

il corno - the horn or horns worn as an amulet to protect the bearer from the powers of the Evil Eye.

il mal occhio - the Evil Eye, an evil force believed in by some Italians from the southern provinces.

la dolce vita - "the sweet life" refers to the gala carefree life often portrayed in Italian cinema.

lire - Italian monetary unit.

magia - a person who has God given powers to fight the evil forces of the Devil.

padroni - employment agents of sorts who found work for Italian immigrants, paid their passage to America many times and often exploited the workers by holding them in a sort of bondage until the passage fare was paid off. *Padrone* is the singular.

paesani - those who are of the same village. In the U.S. *paesan'* is often used among Italians to refer to a person from any part of Italy.

pergamena - a lambskin parchment used as a talisman to fight the Evil Eye.

Santa Pasqua - Holy Easter.

tarantella - a folk dance, originating in southern Italy. It is also called the mad dance and is named after the town of Taranta.

Waldensians - a group of Protestants in the northern Piedmont region of Italy who migrated to America in the 1600's.

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SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1. Investigate the history of Italian immigration to your community. Construct a graph showing the numbers of Italians arriving in different years. Find out where they came from in Italy and what they did when they reached Connecticut.
2. As an individual (or class) project, Italian immigrants might be interviewd and/or invited to speak with the class. If this is to be done, great care should be taken: 1) to interview only those people who are willing to help; 2) to listen and to record their stories without prestructuring their answers by a list of specific questions—the best question to ask is: "Please tell me about your experiences in immigrating to Connecticut,"; and 3) to avoid generalizing from a few accounts.
3. A field trip could be taken to an Italo-American neighborhood to explore first hand various sights, sounds and smells. Students might enjoy talking with Italo-Americans who live there, window-shopping in the stores and tasting various Italian or Italo-American foods in restaurants or bakeries.
4. An interesting historical study could be made of the development and destruction of one of the major "Little Italies" in Connecticut.
5. Make a list of streets, public buildings, streams, rivers, etc., in your community which are named after Italians. Investigate to find out who these people were.
6. Visit one of the Italian ethnic churches in Connecticut. Take particular notice of what makes Italian saints unique and which saints are most popular among Italo-Americans.
7. Compile a history of Italo-American social organizations in your community. Attend some of their meetings and participate in their activities (especially processions or feasts).
8. Compile a collection of news articles about Italo-Americans in Connecticut.
9. Research the differences between Italian and Italo-American food by comparing cook books and trying out recipes.
10. Identify local Italo-American artists—painters, sculptors, architects, musicians—and learn about their contributions to Connecticut.
11. Obtain and read copies of Connecticut's Italo-American publications.
12. Study about Dr. Maria Montessori and her ideas on education. If possible, visit a nearby Montessori school.
13. Make a list of prominent Italo-American politicians in Connecticut. A study could be conducted to find out if they think their ethnicity influences voters today.
14. Read and discuss the only two published accounts of Italian immigrants writing about their adventures in coming to Connecticut and what life was like for them here: Antonio Gioia, *Fifty Years In My Adopted Country*, Vanity Press, 1959; Armando Perretta, *Take A Number*, New York: William Morrow & Co., 1957.
15. Create a mural which tells the story of an Italian immigrant family's move from a little southern village to Connecticut.
16. Write and produce a skit or a play which depicts life in a "Little Italy."